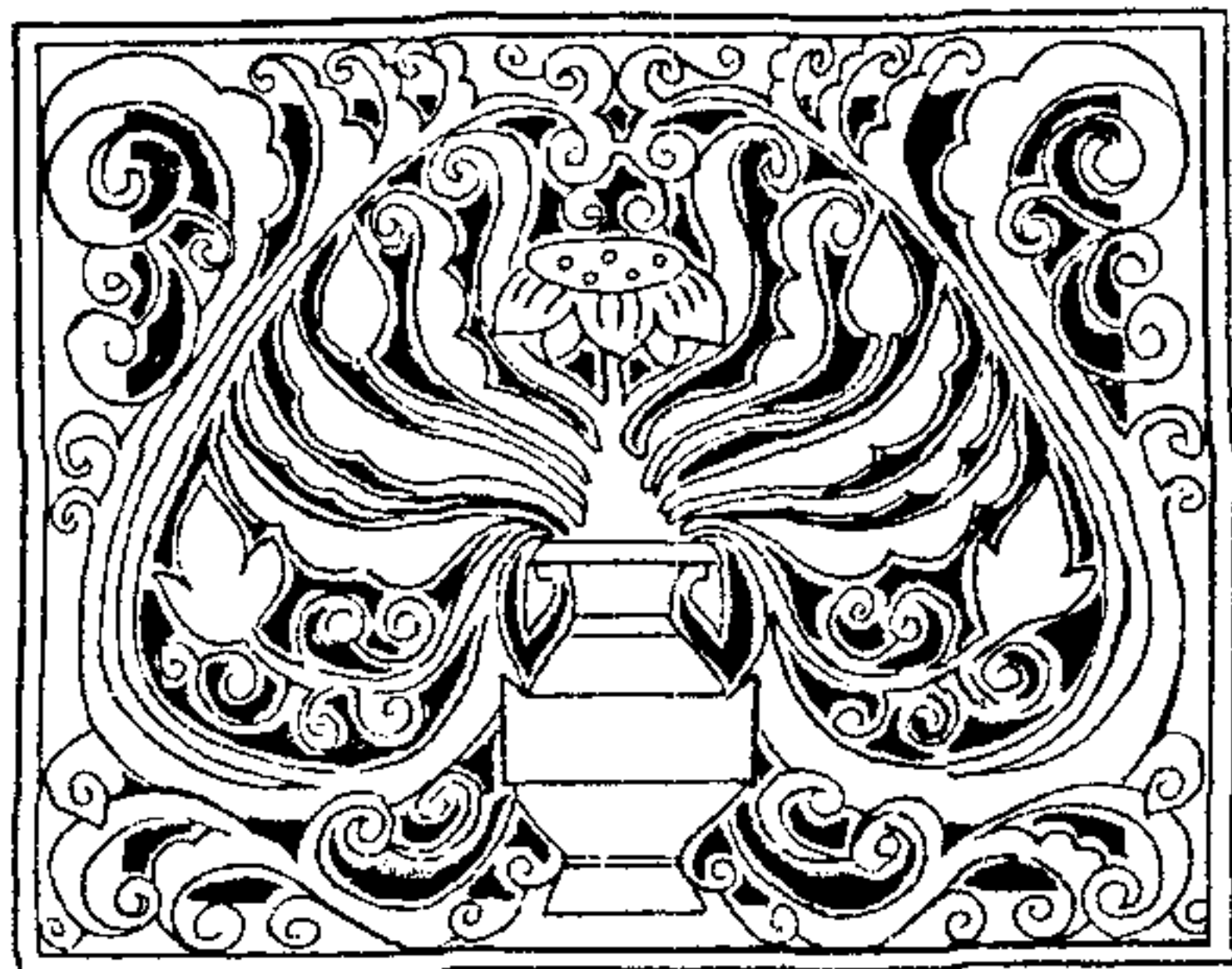




PRABUDDHA BHARATA

A Monthly Journal of the
Ramakrishna Order
started by Swami Vivekananda in 1896

Editorial Office

P.O. Mayavati, Via : Lohaghat
Dt. Champawat 262 524, U.P.

Publication Office

5 Dehi Entally Road
Calcutta 700 014

Phone (91)(33)244 0898

245 2383

226 8000

Fax 245 0050

Email: advaita@giascl01.vsnl.net.in



Cover: Sri Ramakrishna Temple

Belur Math

Inset: Prayer Hall

AUGUST 1998

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Rates of Subscription (inclusive of Postage)

	Annual	3 Years	20 Years	Patron (25 Years)
India	Rs. 60	Rs. 170	Rs. 600	Rs. 1500
Sri Lanka & Bangladesh	Rs. 180	Rs. 500	Rs. 2500	Rs. 5000
U.S.A. & Canada	U.S. \$ 20	\$ 60	\$ 300	\$ 600
Other Countries	U.K. £ 15	£ 45	£ 225	£ 500

Names of patron subscribers are published in *Prabuddha Bharata*.

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उत्तिष्ठत
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प्राप्य
वरान्निबोधत



PRABUDDHA BHARATA

ARISE! AWAKE! AND STOP NOT TILL THE GOAL IS REACHED

Vol. 103

AUGUST 1998

No. 8

Divine Wisdom

DHRUVA'S DISCOMFITURE AT THE HANDS OF SURUCHI

तथा चिकीर्षमाणं तं सपत्न्यास्तनयं ध्रुवम्।
सुरुचिः शृण्वतो राज्ञः सेष्यमाहातिगर्विता॥

बालोऽसि बत नात्मानमन्यस्त्रीगर्भसम्भृतम्।
नूनं वेद भवान् यस्य दुर्लभेऽर्थे मनोरथः॥

Extremely haughty as she was, Suruchi, on seeing her co-wife's son Dhruva presenting himself to be seated on the king's lap along with her own son, burst into the following bitter words at him in the very hearing of the king.

न वत्स नृपतेर्धिष्यं भवानारोढुमर्हति।
न गृहीतो मया यत्त्वं कुक्षावपि नृपात्मजः॥

Boy! You do not deserve to be seated on the king's lap. For, though you are the king's son, you were not born of me.

Being a mere boy, you are not aware that you were born of the womb of another woman. So you sought this privilege, which is impossible and improper for you to think of.

तपसाऽऽराध्य पुरुषं तस्यैवानुग्रहेण मे।
गर्भे त्वं साधयात्मानं यदीच्छसि नृपासनम्॥

If you aspire to sit on the king's lap, you have got to worship the Lord, and by His grace, be born in my womb.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 4.8.10-13

Fixing the Mind on God - VII

Activity may be physical or mental. Regarding all physical activity we saw in the last month's editorial that we can perform actions physically in such a manner that we do not lose touch with the Divine within and around us. Actions should not be mechanically performed, but at every moment of performing actions we should be aware that we are trying to live Vedanta practically and not merely theoretically for making a show of our erudition and scholarship. We saw that we could begin to do this by thinking of God before commencing a work, once in a while while performing it, and at the conclusion of the work. Eventually it becomes natural with us.

Actions proceed from the Self, the Inner Controller, but our ego tries to usurp the fruits of actions and comes to grief. The Divine is the inspirer of all actions, It sustains all human effort, and It dispenses the fruits of actions also. But, instead of hankering after the fruits, one should recognize that one has merely been an instrument and offer the fruits of the actions to the Divine. Or, one may perform each work as worship of God in His manifold forms, in which case actions are performed to please God and not for the fruits. Instead of going in for ego-propelled actions, we should opt for divinely inspired actions. Every night when we go to sleep, our spent up energies are replenished from that mine of Energy within, and unquestioningly we are allowed to use that Energy the next day. We should recognize the play of that fathomless source of Energy within us and around us which brings into existence a world bubbling with actions. It was perhaps this which led Narendranath to lose his consciousness of the external world on seeing a colony of buzzing bees in ceaseless action.

The world is a grand play of this Energy.

This month we shall consider our mental actions. Mind is ever restless, always tossed into waves, so much so a great king like Arjuna had to admit that, despite bringing legions under his thumb, his own mind was as difficult to control as the turbulent wind. Sri Krishna however tells Arjuna that even the turbulent mind can be brought under one's control through *abhyāsa* (repeated practice) and *vairāgya* (renunciation).

What is renunciation? People generally think that one should give up one's near and dear ones or deeply coveted things to become men of renunciation. What can one renounce? Can one renounce one's own shadow? No. One can renounce only that which is not one's own. Upon the warp and woof of Brahman, *Māyā* has spread out the world that we perceive. We are accustomed to identify among the various things one particular entity and call it the 'I', and the rest we divide into two: (i) the 'mine', and (ii) the 'not mine'. Sri Ramakrishna refers to 'me and mine'. The sense of 'me' brings in the sense of 'not me', and the 'not me' has two subdivisions: 'mine' and 'not mine'. Renunciation means to see the unalloyed Truth. It is to free oneself from the idea of the other: 'make the whole world your own', 'no one is a stranger', as the Holy Mother said. And in this, one's own ego is the hurdle. When the 'I' goes all troubles will be at an end. Instead of saying 'all is Brahman', Swamiji preferred the truer expression of this truth: 'All is not; Brahman alone is.' *Abhyāsa*, repeated practice, is to bring this idea to the fore in thought, word and deed. In the language of the devotee, it is to bring God into the picture in our daily life. Thus, renunciation is not so much giving up of that

which will one day be given up anyway; it is giving up our foolish notions and getting established in the truer world-view. The earlier that is done the better for us and others around us.

Have you looked at the thought process itself, not as a psychologist, not as a psychiatrist, but as an aspirant? Thoughts come and go, they keep impinging on us. Some thoughts we are unable to drive away, some we are unable to invite! Then again, thoughts vanish to give rise to new thoughts. Sequence of bombardments on the human mind: $t_1, t_2, \dots, t_i, \dots$. An unending sequence! One may look at one's own thoughts and try to see the *kind* of thoughts that arise. Do what they do in 'sorting': keep, say, ten buckets and place your thoughts as they arise, in one or the other of the buckets, classifying these thoughts from spiritually harmful (Bucket No. 1) to spiritually beneficial (Bucket No. 10). For the worldly man we can expect that his thinking leans more towards the 'harmful' side, and (unfortunately) he enjoys and delights in his thoughts. With the same pattern of thoughts, the spiritual aspirant would be deeply worried. And, in fact, that is the state of the new entrant into the spiritual field, and he thinks that it is peculiar to him. With evolution, one can expect a shift in the 'mode' (a term in statistics meaning the 'fashion' or the event with a maximum occurrence) from the spiritually harmful to the spiritually beneficial. Even such are in the grip of harmful thoughts once in a while. Those established in spiritual life—the blessed ones—find it equally difficult to bring the mind down without clinging desperately to some simple desires! That should be an encouragement for us, for we can expect that one day we too will be in a position much better than that we are in today.

Then there is another way we can look at thoughts. Maybe one thought completely subsides, as a wave into the ocean, and there arises another thought, just as a new wave

arises. The momentum of the first wave is *completely* transferred to the succeeding waves. In this model, one cannot hope for much of a refinement in thought, for the thought energy does not get purified.

It is perhaps better to think that a part of one thought is retained and, on it as the base, the second thought is constructed. This is how it is when thoughts are 'link'-ed. At one extreme, thoughts are 'chaotic' (without links, without any coherence) and at the other end, thoughts are 'streamlined' (arranged, linked). In one's literary output, or arguments for/against a proposition, or while one writes computer programmes, one can easily discern the state of the mind: chaotic at one extreme, and streamlined at the other. The chaotic mind results in what is called in computer parlance, 'spaghetti logic', a jumbled up logic. When a man with a usually streamlined thinking gets 'disturbed' because of some event, he may drop to somewhere between chaotic and streamlined thinking. But a person with chaotic thinking cannot produce a commendable output, however he may try. So there is definitely a training which one must receive to enable the mind to behave in a streamlined way. It is the pure mind, the simple mind, the straightforward mind that is transparent and can think and express clearly.

Talking of linking between thoughts, it is possible that the first thought and the tenth thought, for example, are totally different! Watch a gossip in progress. It may begin with a very good topic, but slowly the discussion shifts to something mundane, something inconsequential. We are not able to hold the discussion at a particular level. Contrary to this we find some minds starting from something trivial and working all the way to the top! Now, you want me to talk about the women of India, is how Swamiji may begin a talk, but soon you will find him discussing the best in women and shifting to the Spirit. We should develop that state of

mind where it is buoyant and reaches the highest flights naturally. If the mind can plunge to the rock bottom, can it not, with a little struggle, with a little patient effort (grace not excluded) become a covetable possession in the hands of the user?

How do you look at things in the world? As everyone else does, we suppose. Can we not deify the world around us? That is the 'renunciation' the *Īśa Upaniṣad* talks about. And that is for practice, not for merely talking. Arjuna asks in the tenth chapter (sloka 17) of the *Gita* this interesting and very useful question: 'In what ways, always thinking of You, O Yogin, can I know You? In which particular objects are You to be meditated upon by me?' The expression is highly beautiful: 'in what ways, always thinking of You' and 'in which particular objects'. The ideal is to fix the mind in God, to always think of the Lord, the Indweller, the Inner Controller. What we have are objects outside and the 'place' within the body where one meditates. When the mind goes out to greet external objects, how should it do that if one is spiritual? As one meditates on God within the body, one should naturally meditate on God in the world around. Carried to the ultimate, as we shall see towards the end of this month's editorial, we should not 'touch' anything except as Divine. Sri Krishna gives the answer to Arjuna's question in many slokas (though He had, in chapters VII to IX, given brief sketches) after first admitting that 'there is no end to the details of My glories' (sloka 19) and concludes by saying again, 'there is no end to My divine glories; these details of My glories I have only stated in brief' (sloka 40). He gives the broad guideline: 'Whatever thing is glorious, excellent, or pre-eminent, verily, know that is born of a portion of My splendour' (sloka 41). In the modern age, Sri Ramakrishna expresses this idea by saying 'There is a special manifestation of God's power in a man who has any outstanding gift, such as proficiency in music'¹. 'He who

meditates on God for many days has substance in him, has divine power in him. Further, he who sings well, plays well on a musical instrument, or has mastered any one art, has in him real substance and the power of God'². The devotees of God are special: 'The soul through which God sports is endowed with His special power. ...The devotee is God's drawing-room. God loves to sport in the heart of His devotee. It is there that His special power is manifest'³.

The devotees will generally like the idea that wherever there is anything good, there God is manifest. So, everything good can be linked to God and His power. But what about those places in which there is a manifestation of the bad? Certain religions bring in the Satan, and, in the fight between God and the Satan, the devotee is tested, is made to suffer but he ultimately comes out victorious. Swamiji however questions the need to bring in two, a God and a Satan. He says, 'He [the same God] sends death and life, plague and epidemics, and everything. If such is God, He is the good; He is the evil; He is the beautiful; He is the terrible; He is life; and He is death.'⁴ In and through what is bad also, the same God manifests. Fire is neither good nor bad; when it cooks one's food it is said to be good, but when it burns down a house no one calls it good. It is we who call it good sometimes and bad at other times. A funny incident in which Swami Turiyananda was quieted by the 'unlettered' Swami Adbhutananda is appropriate here:

Once, at Baranagore Math, Swami Turiyananda, who had very deep knowledge of the scriptures, was saying that God was all kind and

1. *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* (Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1994), p. 111.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 561.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 320.

4. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, vols. 1 to 8, 1989, vol. 9, 1997), vol. 6, p. 54. [Hereafter, CW.]

was above any sense of hatred or partiality. At this Latu Maharaj (Swami Adbhutananda) ejaculated, 'Nice indeed! You are defending God as if He is a child.' 'If God is not impartial,' said Swami Turiyananda, 'is He then a despot like the Czar of Russia, doing whatever He likes according to His caprice?' 'All right, you may defend your God is you please,' replied Latu Maharaj, 'but this you should not forget that He is also the power behind the despotism of a Czar.'⁵

It is the same Divine Power that manifests variously in and through all objects in this world. Consider a she-leopard jumping on a deer and feeding on the body of the deer. The deer says that it is killed by the she-leopard (*pralaya*), the she-leopard herself says that she is merely sustaining her body (*sthiti*), and the cub that the she-leopard gives birth to says that it was born because of that act (*sr̥ṣṭi*). The Divine Energy thus functions in every action in a three-fold manner. Bad and good are merely relative standpoints, as *we* perceive things.

It may appear strange but Sri Ramakrishna could not look upon even women of questionable character, neglected and scorned by society, except as manifestations of the Divine Mother. He advised Swami Turiyananda not to look upon women with contempt but to regard and revere them as the manifestation of the Divine Mother.

Such was the spiritual transformation that came about in Swami Vivekananda that he was forced to give vent to the following observation in a letter to Mr. Leggett dated 6 July 1896:

At twenty years of age I was the most unsympathetic, uncompromising fanatic; I would not walk on the footpath on the theatre side of the streets in Calcutta. At thirty-three, I can live in the same house with prostitutes and never would think of saying a word of reproach to them. Is it degenerate? Or is it that I am broadening out into the Universal Love which is the Lord Himself?⁶

5. *The Apostles of Sri Ramakrishna*, (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1972), p. 288.

The ideal Swamiji placed before humanity is this: that of not seeing evil in the first place, and that of piercing the veil of ignorance and seeing the Divine within, for what is evil but 'misplaced divinity'? We have a revealing incident that occurred in Cairo⁷ of how Swamiji and his friends found themselves 'in a squalid, ill-smelling street, where half-clad women lolled from windows and sprawled on doorsteps. The Swami noticed nothing until a particularly noisy group of women on a bench in the shadow of a dilapidated building began laughing and calling to him.' Detaching himself from his friends, Swamiji approached the bench and began to weep saying, 'Poor children!' The women had, each of them, merely misplaced 'her divinity into her body' as Swamiji put it; each had only to rise beyond, above the body level, above the mind, the senses and the intellect, and come face to face with Truth.

Imbibing the changed vision which great spiritual personalities had towards the afflicted souls, this world will no more be a nightmare. The world will no more carry with it depressing associations in the mind. On the other hand, everything now termed by us as good or bad will be a constant reminder to the Divinity trying to express Itself through many forms. Forms are but pillow-cases through which the light of Atman shines forth; only the sheaths make the brilliance dull in some places and bright in others. As Swamiji aphoristically put it, 'Tear aside the mask and find the same [God].'⁸ Then the world will no more be a 'frame-work of illusion'; it will be a 'mansion of mirth'. Who would not opt for it?

(to be continued)

6. CW, vol. 6, p. 366.

7. *Life of Swami Vivekananda* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1993), vol. 2, p. 557 and *Swami Vivekananda in the West: New Discoveries* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1987), p. 396.

8. CW, vol. 6, p. 55.

EXHORTATION TO THE YOUTH OF INDIA - II

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

... speaking and not doing has become a habit with us. What is the cause of that? Physical weakness. This sort of weak brain is not able to do anything; we must strengthen it. First of all, our young men must be strong. Religion will come afterwards. Be strong, my young friends; that is my advice to you. You will be nearer to Heaven through football than through the study of the Gita. ... You will understand the Gita better with your biceps, your muscles a little stronger. You will understand the mighty genius and the mighty strength of Krishna better with a little of strong blood in you. You will understand the Upanishads better and the glory of the Atman when your body stands firm upon your feet, and you feel yourselves as men. (*Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, vol. 3, p. 242) [Hereafter **CW**.]

The whole of the Western world is on a volcano which may burst tomorrow, go to pieces tomorrow. They have searched every corner of the world and have found no respite. They have drunk deep of the cup of pleasure and found it vanity. Now is the time to work so that India's spiritual ideas may penetrate deep into the West. Therefore young men of Madras, I specially ask you to remember this. We must go out, we must conquer the world through our spirituality and philosophy. There is no other alternative, we must do it or die. The only condition of national life, of awakened and vigorous national life, is the conquest of the world by Indian thought. At the same time we must not forget that what I mean by the conquest of the world by spiritual thought is the sending out of life-giving principles, not the hundreds of superstitions that we have been hugging to our breasts for centuries. These have to be weeded out even on this soil, and thrown aside, so that they may die for ever. These are the causes of the degradation of the race and will lead to the softening of the brain. (*CW*, vol. 3, pp. 277-8)

Young men of Madras, my hope is in you. Will you respond to the call of your nation? Each one of you has a glorious future if you dare believe me. Have a tremendous faith in yourselves, like the faith I had when I was a child, and which I am working out now. Have that faith, each one of you, in yourself — that eternal power is lodged in every soul — and you will revive the whole of India. Ay, we will then go to every country under the sun, and our ideas will before long be a component of the many forces that are working to make up every nation in the world. We must enter into the life of every race in India and abroad; we shall have to work to bring this about. Now for that, I want young men. 'It is the young, the strong, and healthy, of sharp intellect that will reach the Lord', say the Vedas. This is the time to decide your future — while you possess the energy of youth,

not when you are worn out and jaded, but in the freshness and vigour of youth. Work — this is the time; for the freshest, the untouched, and unsmelled flowers alone are to be laid at the feet of the Lord, and such He receives. Rouse yourselves, therefore, for life is short. There are greater works to be done than aspiring to become lawyers and picking quarrels and such things. A far greater work is this sacrifice of yourselves for the benefit of your race, for the welfare of humanity. ...Life is short, but the soul is immortal and eternal, and one thing being certain, death, let us therefore take up a great ideal and give up our whole life to it. Let this be our determination, and may He, the Lord, who 'comes again and again for the salvation of His own people', to quote from our scriptures — may the great Krishna bless us and lead us all to the fulfilment of our aims! (CW, vol. 3, pp. 303–4)

Young men of Calcutta, arise, awake, for the time is propitious. Already everything is opening out before us. Be bold and fear not. It is only in our scriptures that this adjective is given unto the Lord — Abhih, Abhih. We have to become Abhih, fearless, and our task will be done. Arise, awake, for your country needs this tremendous sacrifice. It is the young men that will do it. 'The young, the energetic, the strong, the well-built, the intellectual' — for them is the task. And we have hundreds and thousands of such young men in Calcutta. (CW, vol. 3, pp. 318–9)

I have done nothing as yet; you have to do the task. If I die tomorrow the work will not die. I sincerely believe that there will be thousands coming up from the ranks to take up the work and carry it further and further, beyond all my most hopeful imagination ever painted. I have faith in my country, and especially in the youth of my country. The youth of Bengal have the greatest of all tasks that has ever been placed on the shoulders of young men. I have travelled for the last ten years or so over the whole of India, and my conviction is that from the youth of Bengal will come the power which will raise India once more to her proper spiritual place. Ay, from the youth of Bengal, with this immense amount of feeling and enthusiasm in the blood, will come those heroes who will march from one corner of the earth to the other, preaching and teaching the eternal spiritual truths of our forefathers. And this is the great work before you. Therefore, let me conclude by reminding you once more, 'Arise, awake and stop not till the desired end is reached.' Be not afraid, for all great power, throughout the history of humanity, has been with the people. From out of their ranks have come all the greatest geniuses of the world, and history can only repeat itself. Be not afraid of anything. You will do marvellous work. (CW, vol. 3, pp. 320–1)

Muṇḍaka-Upaniṣad

SWAMI SRIDHARANANDA

(Continued from the previous issue)

In the previous two *Muṇḍakas* the procedure mentioned for experiencing Brahman within oneself were more theoretical in treatment, and one had to work out how to practicalise them in one's life. Here, in the third *Muṇḍaka*, the knotty problem of a *Jīva* — how to get rid of *Jīvatva* and install the idea of *Paramātmān* within one — is dealt with. Up till now were told the various methods of meditating on one's self to enable one to realize the essential truth of the individual self. The ego (*Ahaṁkāra*) has to be eliminated, individuality got rid of, and a sense of universality instilled.

द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया
समानं वृक्षं परिषस्वजाते।
तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वत्त्य-
नश्नन्नन्यो अभिचाकशीति॥

*Dvā suparṇā sayujā sakṣāyā
samānaṁ vṛkṣaṁ pariśasvajāte;
Tayor-anyaḥ pippalaṁ svādv-atty-
anaśnann-anyo abhicākaśīti. (III.i.1)*

Two birds, that are ever associated and are in friendship, cling close to the self-same tree. Of these two, the one eats the sweet fruits (of divergent tastes), and the other looks on without eating.

Imagine a tree laden with fruits and two birds — fast bound companions — with the same excellent plumage sitting on that tree. Regarding their excellence Swami Vivekananda says that it refers to their potential divinity. The two are absolutely equal but sitting on two different branches. One of them, sitting at a lower level, pecks at the

fruits growing on the tree. If the fruit is ripe, delicious and tasty, the bird is happy. But if the fruit is not ripe, but sour and bitter in taste, it becomes sad and miserable, i.e., that bird is battered by the world, subject to its cruel conditions, and makes itself utterly miserable as it is not poised in the knowledge of its true original nature. The second bird is not tempted to peck at the fruits. He looks down at the miserable condition of the lower bird and enjoys itself as an eternal witness of the whole show by not experiencing the *sukha-duḥkha* (joy and sorrow) of the world. The idea is: achieving the state of an uninvolved, detached, eternal witness of the world scenario is one way of reaching the goal.

The meaning is that though the birds are of the same feather, one has somehow got over the inborn sense of greed for the things of the world, having gone through the whole gamut of experience, like Śaunaka. It merely watches what his friend, the other bird, is doing. That bird, as it were, has also gone through all the experiences of happiness-misery in the world. Know for sure, the happy or miserable fruits of deeds cannot be by-passed by either bird. Ignorance is not purity, but not to be tempted by the evanescent things of life is purity. The innocence of childhood is not purity, for the child has not gone through the experiences of life. Purity must be based on knowing every fact of life, all its enjoyments, and on being so disciplined that nothing low attracts him. Then only he can be called pure. The second bird, the Seer, has gone through the experiences of his *karma-phala* (fruits of action) — pleas-

ant, unpleasant and indifferent — and understood where it all leads one to, i.e., to further bondage. So, he slowly draws himself within and refuses to be tempted by the world objects any more. But he does not die or become inanimate; rather he becomes much more sensitive, much more receptive, than the other person busying with his *karma-phala*.

The first bird is the aspirant, the *sādhaka*, while the second bird is the *siddha* (the enlightened). The first is the *jīvātmā* (the separate individual, while the second is one whose *jīvātva* (individual selfhood or ego), has come to an end by being merged in the Absolute.

The Sankhya philosophy says that *Prakṛti*, the cosmic energy of nature, energizes the whole universe, while *Puruṣa*, the Soul, is an eternal witness, who by its very presence makes *Prakṛti* work or become activated. Sri Ramakrishna gives the example of a mother, terribly busy at her daughter's wedding, who runs now and then to her husband, who is sitting leisurely, to ask what she should do, and receiving at each stage support, sanction and direction from her husband, who however remains totally uninvolved. Similarly, *Prakṛti* moves the world because of the proximity of the *Puruṣa* — the uninvolved eternal Being. Scriptures give the example of a crystal ball without colour of its own for the *Puruṣa*. If a red or yellow flower (*Prakṛti*) is placed near it, the crystal ball appears red or yellow as the case may be. While the majority see the colour of the crystal on placing these flowers, one or two discriminating people understand that the crystal itself has no colour. The goal of all *sādhana*, according to Sankhya, is that *jīva* should identify itself with the *Puruṣa* and not get involved in *Prakṛti*'s magic show. This is the manner in which Sankhya philosophy interprets this *mantra* and challenges the Vedantic interpretation of non-duality.

The six schools of philosophy are like six pitchers of various sizes trying to hold the Vedic ocean of knowledge. Each claims that it alone holds it. However, no particular philosophical cogitation in the domain of the intellect can be complete in itself. In fact each is merely *tatastha lakṣaṇa* — indicating the river by pointing to the tree on its bank. Sri Ramakrishna said that each interpretation is true; each showers only that much wisdom as it is capable of revealing. Never say 'iti' — this far and no further. In another parable Sri Ramakrishna told of a poor wood-cutter who made a living by cutting fuel wood. But being directed by a brahmacharin, he proceeded deeper into the woods and found more and more valuable things. Similarly, the more a *jīva* advances spiritually, the richer he becomes. Then Sankhya, Yoga, etc. are all found to be means for realization, each pointing to the same end: an absolute end to misery and the attainment of Absolute Bliss, *ātyantika duḥkha mōrttili*, *parama sukha prāptili* — the dawning of the realization of Sacchidananda Atman or Brahman.

The two birds are absolutely indistinguishable — of the same origin and character and inseparable. But as this has yet to be explained by us, they are described as two separate birds. But their difference is not, *tattvataḥ* (in essence); in truth or reality, they are one and the same as we shall see soon. They are sitting on the self-same tree, and this tree symbolizes the body. The teacher is drawing our attention to the following fact of which we are very much aware. We are ego-centric and feel ourselves to be inadequate and incomplete. So, we try to complete ourselves by 'pecking', as it were, at the fruits — the world objects — to get a feeling of sufficiency. That is, we feel *apūrṇa* (sense of want) and want to become *pūrṇa* (filled to the brim and overflowing), by experiencing the world. But the inner being — not yet known — is absolutely at peace with him-

self, and being full, adequate, is not interested in gathering things around It to make Itself full (*pūrṇa*). That Self also resides within the same 'tree' or body. The first self is the ego-centric *Jīva*, and the second is the Divine Atman.

The teacher is suggesting that we should dive deep within ourselves and try to see if there is any level of awareness within us, where we are not buffeted by the affairs of the world. Find that level of undisturbed tranquility, that Self which is an eternal Witness of the world panorama and enjoying it. In another parable Sri Ramakrishna talked of two persons, who were playing a game of chess. A third person, who knows the rules of the game and is not involved in the game, is a spectator of the game and not at all concerned about winning or losing the game, i.e., unagitated by the result of the game. The players are tense, restless, while the spectator is under no stress or strain. So, of the three, the spectator enjoys the game most of all. This is the position of the second bird in the words of dualist devotees; he is enjoying the sport.

समाने वृक्षे पुरुषो निमग्नोऽ-
नीशया शोचति मुह्यमानः।
जुष्टं यदा पश्यत्यन्यमीश-
मस्य महिमानमिति वीतशोकः॥

*Samāne vṛkṣe puruṣo nimagno-
'nīśayā śocati muhyamānaḥ;
Juṣṭam yadā paśyaty-anyam-iśam-
asya mahimānam-iti, vīta-śokaḥ* (III.i.2)

On the self-same tree the individual soul remains sunken (in ignorance) and so he grieves being worried by his impotence; when he sees (by meditation) this — the other —, the (adored) Lord, contented and in His greater glory, he becomes liberated from sorrow.

Now the teacher explains why the sec-

ond bird is enjoying the world while living in it, and the first bird is being battered by the world. In the same tree means, both are living in this one form: physical and psychical. The person who thinks himself to be an ego-centric individual and acts as such, becomes submerged, sunk, drowned, as it were, because he thinks himself *anīśa* (powerless), and, as such, out of delusion he forgets that he is really the Divine in human form having imposed on himself the qualities of a *Jīva*: '*kartā aham, bhoktā aham*, I am the doer of the deeds, I am the enjoyer of the fruits of those deeds.' When he interacts with the world with this frame of mind he grieves, and is in an agony of misery.

When this same person, having gone through the battering, grueling experiences of life, sits and meditates on *Juṣṭam* — that Object the awareness of which the yogis keep developing within themselves by re-educating themselves and emphasizing the fact that there is a great purpose behind our being born, namely, '*Jīvanmukti, sukha-prāpti*'. Though he is contained in this psycho-physical frame, yet he has tasted the fruit of freedom by experiencing his true nature: *anyam īśam paśyati* — Its glory, Its excellence, Its greatness (*asya mahimānam*). Then he will not be touched by suffering; he will have transcended misery (*vītaśokaḥ*). For example, if a hundred pitchers filled with water are placed out in the open, the self-luminous sun will be reflected in all of them. If one is not aware of the sun, he will see the hundred reflected suns. If one takes a stick and breaks one pot after another, the reflections one by one go back to merge in the sun, their origin. So, break the reflection, which is the ignorance of the true sun or Atman. The individual self, as he is now, is not established in his true nature, say the scriptures. Sri Ramakrishna gives the parable: While cooking food, you light a fire and place a pot with water, rice and vegetables over the fire. Then

(Continued on page 493)

The Essence of Srimad Bhagavad Gita

P.V. NARAYANA SWAMY

Says the author, 'this [the fifteenth] chapter of the Gita is specially important for reasons more than one. It provides a succinct summary of the whole of the Gita. Moreover, to the exclusion of the other seventeen stimulating chapters, Bhagavan Sri Krishna declared this chapter alone as a self-contained scripture.' The author further highlights the importance of this chapter by stating, '[that it] also touches on Vedanta in that it tersely covers themes such as the theory of saṁsāra, the transmigration of the jīva, and the transcendental nature of the Divine, and shows how man can cut across saṁsāra to achieve salvation.

*Iti guhyatamam śāstram-
idamuktam mayānagha;
Etadbuddhivā buddhimānsyāt
kṛtakṛtyaśca bhārata. —Gita, XV.20.*

O sinless Arjuna! This mystic and profoundly sacred śāstra (scripture) has been expounded (to you) by Me. He who understands it becomes wise and gets total fulfilment in all his pursuits, O descendant of Bharata.

So says Bhagavan Sri Krishna at the end of chapter fifteen of the *Bhagavad Gita*.

This chapter of the *Gita* is specially important for reasons more than one. It provides a succinct summary of the whole of the *Gita*. Moreover, to the exclusion of the other seventeen stimulating chapters, Bhagavan Sri Krishna declared this chapter alone as a self-contained scripture.

In the present-day world, men and women are so helplessly engrossed in worldly pursuits, that they find little or no time to practise religion. The chanting of this short chapter assumes added significance because it contains not only the quintessence of the *Gita*, but also dwells on the lofty aspects of Vedanta in simple language. Many aspirants, therefore, recite this as a daily *pārāyana* (repetition) in the midst of their other time-consuming chores, and thereby gain spiritual wisdom.

It is an illumination to list the reasons

why this chapter qualifies to be called a religious scripture:

1. Prakaraṇa (Topic): The topic dealt with is the *saṁsāra vṛkṣa*—the tree depicting *saṁsāra* (transmigratory existence) and man's place in it. The tree is conceived to be inverted—having roots above and branches below. The branches of the tree, nourished by nature (qualities), spread above and below implying that some people are sages and savants while others are very much worldly, earth-bound. Using the wood-cutter analogy Sri Krishna says that this tree of *saṁsāra* has to be cut (*enam suvirūḍha-mūlam chitvā*) with the sharp weapon of detachment (*dṛḍhena asaṅga-śastreṇa*) for man's spiritual emancipation.

2. The Goal: The subject matter has a spiritual goal.

*Tataḥ padam tatparimārgitavyam
yasmingatā na nivartanti bhūyaḥ;...*
—(Śloka 4)

... *taddhāma paramam mama* —(Śloka 6)

The goal is man's merging with Brahman, so that there is no return to (rebirth in) *saṁsāra*. Sri Krishna proclaims It as His supreme Abode. This mergence in Brahman marks the culmination of man's quest which is reached after his sense of duality owing to delusion is transcended. It is important to note that Sri Krishna exhorts us to reach a much higher and the eternal state than what

is commonly sought after—heavens—wherein lesser mortals with limited merits enjoy by propitiating one or the other of the plethora of gods in the Hindu pantheon. Once their stock of merits is exhausted, such persons take birth again on earth to become a micro-cog in the macro-wheel of *samsāra*. The demoniac persons on the other hand, suffer in hell, by no means a coveted place, for their misdeeds.

3. Vibhūti (Glory): The inestimable greatness of God's glory is touched upon also:

*Yadādityagatam tejo
jagadbhāsayate'khilam;
Yaccandramasī yaccāgnau
tattejo viddhi māmakam.—(Śloka 12)*

The effulgence in the Sun which illumines the world, and that in the Moon and in the Fire is attributable to My Power.

The elaborate description of Lord's *Vibhūti* (glory) is catalogued in chapter ten wherein, after drawing manifold examples of His Glory from various aspects of nature, flora and fauna, Sri Krishna concludes thus in *Śloka 39*:

*Yaccāpi sarvabhūtānām
bījam tadahamarjuna;
Na tadasti vinā yatsyān-
mayā bhūtāni carācaram.*

Naught exists in the universe without My being the cause (seed), O Arjuna! Nothing—moving or non-moving—can exist without Me.

4. Adhikāri (Eligibility, Qualifications):

*Nirmānamohā jītasaiṅgadoṣā
adhyātmanityā vinivṛttakāmāḥ;
Dvandvairvimuktāḥ sukhaduḥkhasaiṅjī-
gacchantyamūḍhāḥ padamatyayam tat.
—(Śloka 5)*

The basic qualifications (conditions of eligibility) prescribed above are: (a) freedom from pride and delusion, (b) victory over the vice of attachment, (c) ever focussing on spiritual pursuits with one's undivided attention on the Self, and (d) freedom from the

pairs of opposites like happiness/misery etc. Such a wise person reaches the immutable goal.

5. Vighnāḥ (Pitfalls and Obstacles): Those who are *akṛtātmānaḥ* (without self-control), *acetasaḥ* (thoughtless), do not reach the goal, though they strive.

*Yatanto yoginaścainam
paśyantyātmanyavasthitam;
Yatauto'pyakṛtātmāno
nainam paśyantyacetasaḥ.*

—(Śloka 11)

Sincere yogins perceive the Atman within themselves. Not those yogins however, who though striving, lack in self-control and are thoughtless.

The pursuit leading to liberation is a wholtime endeavour and until one reaches the culmination one has to necessarily steer clear of obstacles by being mindful and by practising self-control.

6. Phalaśruti (Benefits):

*Yo māmevamasaimmūḍho
jānāti puruṣottamam;
Sa sarvavidbhajati mām
sarvabhūvena bhārata. —(Śloka 19)*

He who is undeluded knows Me as the supreme Person. He worships Me wholeheartedly with every fibre of his being.

Further, reaching My supreme state they do not return to *samsāra* (Śloka 6).

7. Stuti (Eulogy):

*Iti guhyatamam sāstram-
idamuktam mayānagha;
Etadbuddhvā buddhimānsyāt
kṛtakṛtyaśca bhārata. —(Śloka 20)*

Thus has this most secret doctrine been imparted (to you) by Me, O sinless one! By knowing this, a man will be endowed with wisdom and accomplish everything, O descendant of Bharata!

Bhagavad Gita, like every other scripture, advocates the inner development of man. Every human being in this world is miserably deluded by the notion of duality (*dvandvamoha*). One has the option to either remain fettered in bondage or to become

freed from bondage to the fathomless ocean of *samsāra* (transmigratory existence). In this chapter Sri Krishna paints a beautiful picture with an arresting simile of man and his environment, his true nature, his potentialities for spiritual amelioration, etc. The subject is presented in three stages: (1) The present imperfection in individuals, (2) The goal (state of perfection) attainable, and (3) The way men and women raise themselves. Of course, the basic clarion call of Vedānta is that perfection is *already* there, and that it has to be perforce *discovered*, unveiled. The theme as to how one can evolve spiritually is epigrammatically explained. The crux of the teaching is to gain the 'eye of wisdom' to perceive 'Unity in Diversity'.

The first four *ślokas* sum up, as pointed earlier, in an interesting and arresting manner, through a superb simile, comparing transmigratory experience (*samsāra*) to an upside down peepul tree (*aśvattha*) with roots above and branches below spreading both above and below in luxuriant profusion. Though for the first reading it may sound paradoxical, the spectacle of an uprooted tree is not that uncommon especially when nature's vandalism through thunderstorms, earthquakes, landslides, etc. take place. Moreover, in high school physics we learn that the human eye itself is, in a way, a pin-hole camera which, due to the rectilinear propagation of light, forms an inverted image.

Yet another significant lesson imparted is that *Ūrdhvamūlam* meaning the Root (Truth) is so far above that it is beyond the reach of the rank and file of humanity. As a corollary Bhagavan hastens to add:

*Adhaścordhvaṁ prasṛtāstasya śāklā
guṇaprapṛddhā viṣayaprapūlāḥ;...*

i.e., the branches spread upward and downward, indicating there are *some* sadhakas, who tread the right path (upward), towards the Root, and there are *many* ordinary human beings who remain at a level of consciousness which is out and out mundane.

The Vedas are represented by the leaves which nourish the *samsāra vṛkṣa*. Brahmā (the Creator) is symbolized by the trunk. Those branches which have a rich supply of sap put forth buds, symbolizing the fruits of action. Allegorically the three *guṇas* (*sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) thicken the sap, which in turn makes the *jīva* feast on sense-organs to give rise to buds. The sprouting, leafing and thriving of branches are the inevitable consequences of *guṇas* operating and establishing contacts between sense-organs and sense-objects. The secondary roots extending downward are symbolically *vāsānās* that, through performance of actions and the desire for the fruits of actions, bind man to *samsāra*. We have it in the scriptures:

Mokṣamicchasi cet rājan

viṣayān viṣavat tyajet.

*If you aspire for liberation, O King!
avoid sense-objects like poison.*

In *Bhagavad Gita* (chapter 2, *ślokas* 62-63) it is said:

Dhijāyato viṣayānpuṁsah

saṁgasteṣūpajāyate;

Sanṁgātsaṁjāyate kāmah

kāmātkrodho'bhijāyate.

Krodhādbhavadati saṁmohah

saṁmohāt smṛtīvibhramah;

Smṛtibhramāṁsādbuddhināśo

buddhināśātprañasyati.

By thinking about sense-objects, one gets attached to them. Attachment begets desire for possession. An (unfulfilled) desire makes him angry. Through anger he gets deluded. Delusion results in loss of memory. As a result, man loses his discriminative intelligence (the crest jewel of God's gift to man). Thus, man is ruined beyond redemption.

In these words Bhagavan Sri Krishna details how attachment to sense-objects marks the beginning of man's ruin.

The word *aśvattha* in Sanskrit has an inner meaning. *Śvattha* means that which exists till tomorrow. *Aśvattha* thus signifies that which does not exist till tomorrow (or

for that matter, the next moment), i.e., perishable. It brings to light how *saṁsāra* is in a state of continuous flux. In fact, the only changeless feature of *saṁsāra* is its constantly changing aspect. Bhagavan Sri Krishna warns us that men and women are helplessly caught in an octopus grip by the secondary roots of *saṁsāra vṛkṣa*, which represent *vāsanās*. *Vāsanās* can mean smell also, implying that man's activity leaves a smell for further activity in a continuous vicious circle, ad infinitum. Our *vāsanās* are unfortunate symptoms of our extrovert nature and do not lead us to Truth (Aum) which is far above. Ramakrishna Paramahansa observed that man in the world is like a boat in the high seas. So long as water does not enter the boat, it is safe. Similarly, a man may be in the world, but should not be of it. If worldliness enters his thinking, he is lost.

Sri Krishna, continuing the topic, affirms that the *jīva* is really a part of Himself—Immortal Self—attracting to Itself the body, the mind and the senses which are born of *Prakṛti*. When a *jīva* takes birth in a body or leaves it, it carries with it impressions of former births—just like the wind wafting the smell (from flowers, etc.). We read in chapter 6, *śloka* 44 of the *Gita*:

*Pūrvābhīyāseṇa tenaiva
līriyate hyavaśo'pi sah;...*

For, by that very past practice, he is carried forward even in spite of himself. Man continues in his new birth from where he left off in the preceding one.

Sankaracharya interprets the *aiśa* (*śloka* 7 of chapter 15) with the oft-quoted example of the pot space (*ghaṭākāśa*) and infinite space (*mahākāśa*). The former is space limited by the pot. Once the pot is broken, the two spaces—the limited and the Limitless—merge indistinguishably. Man attains Brahman when the veil of limitations (*upādhis*) is removed; he is no more reborn.

Says Sankaracharya:

*Ślokārdhena pravakṣyāmi
yaduktam granthakoṭibhiḥ;*

*Brahma satyam jagannithiyā
jīvo brahmaiva nāparaḥ.*

In half a *śloka* the essence of what is contained in crores of scriptures, I state — 'Brahman is Truth; the world is illusory. The *jīva* is nondifferent from Brahman.'

The selfsame idea finds expression in the *Maitreyyupaniṣad*. The spiritually evolved *sādhaka* realizes this sublime Truth through the eye of wisdom. The unregenerate, the unintelligent do not. The 'eye of wisdom' Bhagavan Sri Krishna touches upon in chapter 13, *śloka* 34:

*Kṣetrakṣetrajñayorevān
antarān jñānacakṣuṣā;
Bhūtaprakṛtimokṣaṁ ca
yo viduryānti te param.*

Those endowed with the 'eye of wisdom' perceive the difference between *kṣetra* (*Prakṛti*) and *kṣetrajña* (*Spirit, Indweller, Puruṣa*). They reach the Supreme.

Sri Krishna expounds, as stated earlier, His Divine Glory (*vibhūti*) in chapter 10. The same theme is ever so succinctly mentioned here where He affirms that the resplendent splendour of the sun, the softness of moon's effulgence, as also of fire are all attributable to Him. The fertility of the soil, the fire of life—causing digestion of food in beings—are all manifestations of His majesty and magnificence:

*Sarvāsyā cāham hydi saṁnivīṣṭo
mattaḥ smṛtirjñānamapolānam ca;
Vedaḥ ca sarvairahameva vedyo
vedāntakṛd vedavideva cāham.*

—(*Śloka* 15)

I am the Indweller in all. I am the Cause behind knowledge and memory (including their ratiocinative faculty), as also the futility owing to their absence. I am the knower of the Vedas as also what is to be known through the Vedas. I am the author of Vedānta too.

Every being has Him as the *Antaryāmin* (Indweller)—a Witness to all actions though uninfluenced and untainted by these activities. This is only an echo of chapter 6, *śloka* 7 which reads:

*Mattalī paratarāṇi nānyat
kincidasti dhananjaya;
Mayī sarvaṁidam protaṁ
sūtre maṇigaṇā iva.*

*There is nothing higher than I. All these
are held in Me like pearls threaded on a string.*

Ślokas 16 and 17 convey the summary
of the chapter.

*Dvāvīmau puruṣau loke
kṣaraścākṣara eva ca;
Kṣaraḥ sarvāṇi bhūtāni
kūṭastho'kṣara ucyate.
Uttamaḥ puruṣastvanyah
paramātmetyudāhṛtaḥ;
Yo lokatrayamāviśya
bibhartya vyaya īśvaraḥ.*

*There are two types of beings in this
world—the perishable and the Imperishable.
The former is the embodied jīva who, identi-
fied with its body, is subject to vicissitudes.
The latter, the conscious principle (soul) is
unaffected and imperishable. There is, how-
ever, a supreme Spirit known as the supreme
Self (Paramātmā), the immutable Lord,
pervading and supporting the three
worlds.*

We also find the kṣara-Akṣara aspect de-
scribed in chapter 7, śloka 5.

*Apāreyaṁ itastvanyāṁ
prakṛtiṁ viddhi me parāṁ;
Jīva bhūtāni mahābāho
yayedam dhiāryate jagat.*

*As distinct from my lower Prakṛti
(earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intellect
and egoism) is My higher one (the sentient
principle, the Kṣetrajña, the embodied soul)
by which this world is sustained.*

The kṣara (perishable) stands for the chang-
ing world, and Akṣara (Imperishable) stands
for the changeless conscious principle (soul)
residing in bodies and sustaining the world.
The kūṭastha (soul, the Ātman) residing in the
body as mentioned in śloka 16 is immutable
and the same as Paramātmā, vide chapter
13, śloka 31.

*Anādito'at nirguṇato'at
paramātmāyamavyayaḥ;*

*Śarīrastho'pi kaunteya
na karoti na lipyate.*

*That Highest Self (Paramāt-
man)—Immutable, without attributes
and unoriginated Spirit—is untouched
by action and untainted by stain, though
dwelling in the body.*

The idea is that there is the same *Puruṣottama*
in the body (*aṇḍa*) and the Cosmos
(*brahmāṇḍa*)—giving rise to the concept of
UNITY IN DIVERSITY.

The last two ślokas (18 and 19) empha-
size Jnana and Bhakti—a combination of
which is the ideal requirement for spiritual
progress. They are complementary to each
other and, in fact, form the obverse and re-
verse of the same coin—the pursuit of libera-
tion.

We thus find that this chapter not only
summarizes the *Gita* but also touches on
Vedānta in that it tersely covers themes such
as the theory of *samsāra*, the transmigration
of the *jīva*, and the transcendental nature of
the Divine, and shows how man can cut
across *samsāra* to achieve salvation. The ex-
amples quoted above are only illustrative
and by no means exhaustive. We may con-
clude with the words of Sri Krishna:

*Īśvaraḥ sarva bhūtānāṁ
hrd deśe' rjuna tiṣṭhati;
Bhṛāmāyaṇ sarva bhūtāni
yantrārūḍhāni māyayā.*

*The Lord dwells in the heart of all be-
ings. He revolves them with His Māyā, as
though they are objects mounted on a ma-
chine. Seek refuge in Him by surrendering
body, mind and soul to Him, always, and
under all circumstances. By His grace you
shall attain that supreme Abode of peace that
passes all understanding, the Abode from
which there is no return (to *samsāra*). □*

If you want to keep up the spirit of
wonder, you must wander in the alien
land.

Dr. P. Dhanavel, Agartala

The Power of Prayer

MEDURI SATCHIDANANDA MURTY

Sri Meduri Satchidananda Murty is a Senior Officer (Administration) in M/s Goodlass Nerolac Paints Ltd., Hyderabad. This article derives inspiration from the author's firm conviction that the merciful Creator who created this world (human beings in particular), has not left us alone. Under existing human limitations even, there should be, he believes, some communion between both—God and the human—and this is what constitutes prayer. An infallible weapon to attain the goals (dharma, artha, kāma and mokṣa) of human life, what is needed is intense faith in the power of prayer and God's unconditional mercy. The habit of prayer makes life purposeful, joyous, free from fear and anxiety, bereft of confusion and frustration—in a word, fills us with everlasting peace. Prayer culminates in total surrender to God and final emancipation through emptying of the ego and the abundance of God's grace. Youth is the best time to start this communion, the author pleads.

Life, as never before, is becoming more and more complex in today's world. Or, to put it differently, it is a plight of our own making. All hell breaks loose the moment we rise in the morning and continues to torment us till we retire to bed. We see hectic activity all around, it is a rat race, but the irony of it is, even at the end, we remain a rat! Isn't it a pathetic situation! An ox, tied to a grinding-post revolves round it umpteen times—so mechanical is the act; the condition of a lot many people is no different—bull-like they are—turning round and round, yet garnering nothing, making no tangible progress!

This is a hard tangle to unravel, no doubt, but not impossible to wriggle out from. One way is to be aware of our being the performers of our actions—even a tiny part of it. This requires us to think, lessens the mad speed, and sets our voyage in safe routes, converging at a meaningful destination. This is a very useful practice but is not enough and we ought to combine this with another powerful technique, sure and unfailing—a panacea by any standard! Heart-warming it is to realize that the merciful Lord who created us has not left us in wil-

derness, that He stands by the stream of Karma and lifts us up from the whirlpools of life. He gave us tools potent enough to match the ordeal on hand. One such tool that comes in handy is PRAYER—a method so complete, so vibrant and so effective! Holding in ignorance that we are alone in this world, zeroes we are, but endowed with the understanding that we are always charged by the battery of God we turn into heroes.

The pendulum of action starts swinging now from meaninglessness to purposefulness, while the degree of our success pivots on our ability to wield this infallible weapon!

Aetiology of Prayer

Ideally, prayer is a longing for God—a bridge laid by the devotee to reach the realm of God, an emotional and spiritual bond that unites both. The finite human mind, in its gross form, cannot comprehend the origin of this drama, but, for the present, it suffices to know that we have this method with which we can attain to final beatitude, wading through the whims and vagaries of life.

In the backdrop of our own negativities that keep scorching us relentlessly, we need the shield of God's umbrella to live our lives

fearlessly, peacefully and forcefully too! Thus, in practice, prayer, verily, is finding a true friend and a companion of all times, in God. Our human friends may, at times, be narrow and selfish, ditching us on a trivial cause, but, this Friend of friends never deserts the believer and puts Himself in ready gear to do that which is best for the prayerful.

No human, so long as he has not reached the goal, is above worldly problems; rather, problems took birth when human race did. Keeping our eyes and ears open and owning up our problems, if we can carry them to the doorstep of God, He allows us, if only we can do so, to dump them there—absolving us of our burdens and sins! The assiduous practice of prayer gets us this privileged status which helps us to communicate and plead with God—a prerogative, and a nourishing food as well, for the starved spirit. Prayer, even for worldly ends, refines and purifies our whole system and ultimately restores the soul, its original sheen.

Jesus said, 'Men shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God' (St. Matthew, 4.4; also St. Luke, 4.4)—a resounding assurance! God is our father, mother and our 'all', and should be regarded as such with a heart full of warmth and rendered pure, free from malice. Jesus further went on to assure that 'All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive' (St. Matthew, 21.22).

Prayer is as intrinsic to man as gravitational pull is to earth—and is a divine quest that leads the weak and the strong alike across life's vicissitudes and idiosyncrasies. There is no state of being more sublime and ecstatic, as when the mind bathes and dips into the ecstasy of prayer. When we are at the crossroads of indecision, as we often are, sincere prayers strengthen the decision-making faculty in us and the right road is pointed at. As we press on with the practice,

our lives undergo a wonderful transformation to a subtler realm that opens up new vistas and visions all around. At that stage, prayer happens naturally—not a mere practice, but as natural as breathing—not for worldly ends but for the love of God. Why not cultivate this master art with precision and an artless simplicity!

How to Pray

The best and natural way to pray is through the language of the heart. Prayer need not be a rehearsed speech nor a jugglery of words. It need not take a formal expression, either. Silent communion with God is a thousand times more efficacious and glorifying, as, in that state, the mind turns tranquil, serving as an effective conduit to carry our message silently to God. Only we should be sensitive to perceive the VEILED answers given, which arrive to the devotee in a variety of ways.

The process of prayer is unending and signifies a constant reliance on and look for God. Just as the stream of a river flows without break, so also a devotee should pray moment after moment to establish a perennial link with God and this constant association turns his life into one of long prayer and, in due course, fulfils the *summum bonum* of his life.

When we say, 'Namo Narayanaya', we are saluting the Supreme Lord with reverence and love. Even if the chanting be mechanical, it does not matter much, as the verbal expression being endowed with potency, feeling will follow later, upon continued practice. Let no doubt arise whether God hears our prayers or not; hearing He does, but does it in total silence, and enters the scene only at an appropriate time adjusting the environment and circumstances in a way that is best for the devotee. Mistakingly, the devotee says that his prayers are answered sometimes. Truly God understands better than his votary.

One should conduct prayers in a congenial, relaxed mood. A happy union of

body, mind and spirit should be aimed at and achieved. Such a harmony cannot happen in a day or two or in a month, especially when in the midst of conflicts. A sustained practice is needed. When our inner system is, thus, controlled, it automatically gets connected to the all-pervading Existence, bringing about an attunement between the individual and the Cosmic. Peace and tranquillity come to reign—a semblance of right order. In this atmosphere, the devotee drops into a mystic state. In each sitting for prayer, we should try to accomplish this end-result, so as to proceed steadily along our line of practice.

There should be punch in our prayers. I recollect here the funny story of an old woman living in a hut behind a mountain at the foot of which a river was flowing. She nurtured a desire to behold the beauty of the flowing river through the window of her hut but, sadly, the mountain was obstructing the view. She knelt down and prayed to God beseeching Him to move the mountain, so that the river would become visible. She said her prayers for fifteen minutes and then opened her eyes—only to find to her vexation that the mountain hadn't budged an inch. She threw up her hands in disgust and murmured—'I knew before itself that the mountain would not move'! When her prayers were weak and hollow devoid of the basic element of faith, no wonder, they weren't heard. More important, she ought to have known in the first place what to pray for.

What to Pray For

A person usually looks up for God when he is in rough weather. Unable to bear the pangs of life, he relies on a power higher than himself. Trials and tribulations give him wisdom, strength and devotion. When Bhagavan Sri Krishna offered a boon to Kunti, mother of the mighty Pandavas, she asked for 'sufferings'. A strange wish on the face of it, but she was thoughtful and knew that comforts and luxuries inflate one's ego

giving rise to a false complacency that these are real. If the stomach is overloaded, for instance, with rich and spicy food, a whole series of evils are set in motion—sleep overpowers, God runs miles away, while the mind revels in absurd fantasies....

Even as a person should know how to pray, he ought to know what to pray for. How silly it would be if a person prays in the *sanctum sanctorum* like this: 'O God, my tenant is troubling me; he is not vacating; help me please', or, 'Lord, my junior is getting the promotion ahead of me; please stop this!' Aren't such entreaties made to the Lord of the Universe mere jokes and the attitude unfair—resembling that of a fool who asked of a generous king a pumpkin for a reward when he could have asked for riches and mansions! One should be discerning in judging the capacity of the giver, though that is preceded by a long term of foolish prayer!

There is nothing wrong if a prayer starts off for one's own betterment, as, in course of time, it gets properly shaped and covers the family members within the four walls; this divine spark, gradually, extends to his fellowbeings in society as he begins to recognize his Chosen Deity as dwelling in all beings. Look at the gigantic banyan tree and the sprawling branches it spreads, as it grows! Similarly, what does it matter if the prayer begins on a small scale, as long as it contains the fire of spiritual fervour! Just as water poured near a well finds its way across the well-channelled garden, prayer reaches its destination. The seed of prayer planted on the fertile area of the mind sprouts up and grows into that big banyan tree!

Prayers made for others, their happiness and well-being, messages of goodwill and peace to the world at large, are appreciated and quickly responded to, by God, in the form of granting the devotee an expanded awareness. Such prayers attain fruition too. I am reminded here of a personal

experience of my uncle when he was residing in Bombay years back. One day, when he was walking along a narrow road, he saw an old beggar woman, desolate and hungry and crying piteously. No one paid any heed to her, all were too busy in their rat race. Moved at her helpless condition, my uncle stopped and gave her a few coins that would fetch her lunch for the day, but more than the money, he did a far better thing—to pray for the old woman! He prayed that the old woman be given some good time, some smiles on her wrinkled face and, of course, something to eat. After a couple of days, when he happened to pass by that lane again, he was delighted to see the woman munching something and humming too! Evidently, God heard his prayer!!

Self-Surrender, A Must

Surrender to God is the toughest thing to accomplish. If a person says outwardly, 'O God, I surrender myself to Your Supreme Will', but, in his day-to-day life quarrels with everyone on petty causes, he has not understood that in and through others God's Will finds expression. Look at others with God's eyes, is the instruction. In other words, we must develop an equanimous vision in all our activities, under all circumstances. We may fail repeatedly in this arduous task, as the old *samskaras* would raise their ugly hoods quite often, but let us strive to rise every time we fall.

Curbing the ego, therefore, forms the basic discipline when we tread on the path of spirituality. An egotistic man is possessive and cannot bow his head when he comes across personalities endowed with wisdom. Unless he cultivates a loving attitude towards existence as a whole and shares a part of what he has with others, he soon gets frustrated and abandons his efforts in a huff. Jesus wisely said: 'It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God' (St. Matthew, 19.24, St. Luke, 18.25, St. Mark, 10.25)—indeed, worldly

possessions make one egotistic.

What better example can be cited when it comes to self-surrender than that of Draupadi's! She was humiliated by the wily Kauravas in the full glare of the assembly with Duhshasana resorting to the heinous act of disrobing her. When her pleas to the elders there fell on deaf ears, she then turned her attention to Sri Krishna, who was away in Dwaraka, and called out to him for help. As she did so, one of her hands was still clutching the cloth on her body while she raised the other as a gesture of surrendering to Him. When help had not descended yet, and danger appeared to loom large, she raised both her hands in total self-surrender, and lo, endless amount of cloth began emerging from thin air and covered her body—while she herself lost all her earthly consciousness and dropped into a deep state of prayerfulness! What an unparalleled faith she displayed, and for us, a magnificent teaching—that God wants our full mind and not in tidbits!

Where there is demand, there is supply too—an unfailing law of Nature. With all your heart cry out your demand and watch Grace flowing in, as practically as money would from a minting machine. This is true, indeed. Have you ever said: 'O Lord, I worship Thee with all my mind! I will not deviate an inch from Your Path! Thy will be done! Come, reside in my heart! I cannot get along without Thee!?' Humble offerings of this nature penetrate deep and fetch us the benedictions of the Lord, enabling us to make remarkable headway in our quest for Truth.

When I think of surrendering to God, I find the thought of an unknown author highly inspiring. I reproduce those thrilling lines hereunder and share my belief:

One night I had a dream. I dreamed I was walking along the beach with the Lord and across the sky flashed scenes from my life. For each scene I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand, one be-

longed to me and the other to the Lord. When the last scene of my life flashed before me, I looked back at the footprints in the sand. I noticed that many times along the path of my life, there was only one set of footprints. I also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest times in my life. This really bothered me and I questioned the Lord about it. 'Lord, you said that once I decided to follow you, you would walk with me all the way. But I have noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life, there is only one set of footprints. I don't understand why in times when I needed you most, you should leave me.' The Lord replied, 'My precious, precious child, I love you and I would never, never leave you during your times of trial and suffering. When you saw only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you.'

Prayer—The Process of Thanks-giving

When someone does us a favour, we say heartily: 'Thank you very much', or, 'Thanks, I am indebted to you.' These words spring out spontaneously and we mean them! This is the beauty and charm of thanks-giving. However, if such be our sense of gratitude for a worldly favour received, how can we adequately thank the Lord who gave us this body, this splendid life—in a word, all that we possess today?! Can our gratitude ever remain fully expressed when we recognize Him guiding our footsteps towards Him?!

The episode of a saint, narrated by my Guruji Sri Sri Ram, is worth mentioning here. This saint, who lived on the food donated by the villagers, spent most of his time doing meditation at the temple. He used to offer his prayers to the Almighty, throughout the day, for what all He had given him so far in life. In the night also, before going to sleep, he used to shed tears at the feet of the Lord, fearing he may die in the night before sufficiently thanking Him. For this reason, he used to implore the Lord to keep

Him alive till the next morning in order to continue the act of thanks-giving, on and on—non-stop....

A nice example of gratitude, isn't it, to God who bestows on us countless favours even unasked for, with each passing day! The above instance is in conformity with a precious precept given by my Guruji: 'Let your gratitude to God be continuous; like the lub-dub of your heart!'

When I think of thanks-giving, I recollect an amusing event which happened to a friend. He once went to a temple to offer his prayers and as he was doing it, he suddenly realized that he had not locked his bicycle. He grew worried that someone might lift his bicycle, but somehow, he composed himself and prayed to the Lord to see that no evil eyes are cast on his brand new cycle. Later, after coming out of the temple, he was quite happy to find his bicycle intact. He was overwhelmed by God's kindness and, overcome by a sense of gratitude, quickly went into the temple again, leaving the bicycle unlocked for a second time. After profusely saying his thanks to the merciful God, he came out—only to find to his dismay that his bicycle was gone! This goes to show that one may be a devotee, but on that account must not be foolish!

Some people pray to the Lord and have a few of their prayers answered too. They get highly pleased with God's generosity and go about flashing messages left, right and centre how God's grace fell on them occasionally. The entire process, on the other hand, could have remained on low-key, a secret so as to preserve its sanctity. These people are unduly elated over small proofs of divine intervention; they ought not to have satisfied themselves with the tip of the iceberg, when they could have aimed at the iceberg itself—God Himself!

Epilogue

One need not be a man-of-letters, to pray. The blind, the lame, the destitute and the lowly-placed can all pray and enjoy the

Peace that flows from our Heavenly Father. Even a clerk working in a small firm, having difficulty in making both ends meet, may well be communing with the Lord all the time—propelled by circumstances and his hand-to-mouth living. He may also be dedicating his labours of the day to the Lord in the high spirit of *Nishkama Karma Yoga*. In God's vision, there is no low or high—a prince and a pauper are held in the same esteem.

Patience and perseverance of a high order are needed in cultivating this art. Hanuman, the legendary devotee, is a shining example, who kept on chanting Sri Rama's name before His incarnation, during and after too! Celebrated personalities like Tagore and Meera are great votaries of prayer. Gandhiji derived his energies when he wielded the weapon of non-violence, through the power of prayer. There were instances where prayers cured incurable

diseases—pronounced so, by the medical science. It is a medicine for the afflicted body, mind and spirit. The missing link in today's world is, prayer.

People offer flowers to God when they pray. That is good, but the best flower one can offer to the Lord is one's youth, as, at that time, one's strength and stamina will be riding high. The mind, too, will be well-poised, yielding quick results. In contrast, however, in old age, what remain are depleted energies, an irritating mindframe, anxiety and fear of death. These adverse factors deter any spiritual activity to go on. One walks to the temple drawing a long face, all smiles dried out—now and then throwing some coins away, in charity! Should we force God to accept such a withered garland, while the youth had been allowed to be lost in mundane activities and worshipping Mammon? He who weeps for God, doesn't weep in vain! □

Muṇḍaka-Upaniṣad

(Continued from page 482)

you see an upward and downward movement in the cooking pot. The vegetables as it were think 'I am the originator of this movement'. But take away the fire, and all movements cease. It is because of the fire that there is movement in the boiling water. Similarly, we people, with our egotistic conception of being the doer and the master of our movements, suffer endless misery due to this attitude. But once the Divine Self within is known, it is also known that the ego is the erroneous reflection of that Real Divine Self.

Sri Ramakrishna also used to say that there are two beings living within us: one is *kācā āmi* (apparent self) and the other is *pākā*

āmi (real Self). The first, the apparent self, will be destroyed one day. But that which is the real Self will remain. Not knowing this Divine nature the *Jīva* is *anīṣa*, powerless, not the lord and master; so he is ground into a paste by the world. But he who knows his *īśitva*, 'the Divine Lordship within, the real Self within, sees the majesty of that Divine all around him and does not get involved. He is totally freed from the very concept of sorrow, *vītaśokaḥ*. His *moha* or confusion and delusion and consequent disturbance also totally disappear. He is now poised in the glory and majesty of his Divine Self.

(to be continued)

The Heaven of My Delight

PROF. JAYALAKSHMI GOPINATH

Prof. Jayalakshmi Gopinath is of Karnataka.

'Tis said Heaven's battlements are burnished gold;
Its walls are studded with gems of gorgeous hue;
The friezes and cornices are topaz and opal;
Its bowers and balconies are mother of pearl;
The paths are meandering silvery sheen;
Its orchards and gardens a rich emerald green;
The ruby rose and garnet lilies, lovely and radiant.
Its pearl white swans glide on the azure sapphire lakes;
Golden deer frisk and frolic in the glimmering glades;
And the bejewelled peacock dances in graceful manifold ways.
The gods sit in state in their diamond chamber,
On thrones wrought with rare gems of colourful splendour;
Bathed in the lustre of their prismatic glow.
In rich shimmering attire, diademed and adorned,
Tall, handsome, graceful and of majestic mien,
Beauty incarnate, they cast the enchanting spell.

Hush! the jingle bells and tinkle of anklets,
The divine danseuse comes tripping gently on her toes,
Swaying to the rhythm of the lilting stringed symphony,
Played by the master hands of the celestial bards.
Breath-takingly beautiful, she casts her toils of wonder and awe.
Enraptured in the swirl of her alluring dazzle,
Lulled by the gentle notes of the divine melody,
The gods look like statues cast in an iridescent glow.
Is this then the coveted Heaven? This the abode of gods!
I searched and peered, but could not find my God.
I gazed and gazed at the dazzle and the splendour,
My eyes bedimmed in mute anguish,
Confounded by the burning and persistent query: but where *is* my God?

Did someone call? methought I heard the enchanting lute,
Again, yes, once again, it was crystal clear.
I followed the entrancing melody and found myself,
On the sacred banks of the sombre Jamuna.
I eagerly looked around, but He was nowhere to be found.
Sad and tearful, I sat dazed and benumbed.
Hark! again the soft melody filled my being
Oh! where, where was He?
It suddenly dawned that the enchanting tune emanated from depths deep within me.
Oh! my God! blessed, blessed, indeed blessed am I
That, Giridhari, You have installed Yourself for ever and forever,
In the sacred sanctuary of my bleeding heart.
This indeed is bliss, this the Heaven of my delight.□

Reflections on 'Search for the Historical Krishna'

SWAMI MUKHYANANDA

Revered Swami Mukhyanandaji Maharaj is a senior monk of the Ramakrishna Order and an erudite scholar with many publications to his credit. The Swami wrote on request an illuminting preface to the book, Search for the Historical Krishna, by Dr. Navaratna S. Rajaram. This article is a slightly modified version of that preface prepared by the learned author himself for this journal.*

I

Historically speaking, in Hindu religio-philosophical thought, from the early times, i.e. anywhere beyond the 'Aditi-Punarvasu' period of Vedic calendar, belonging to about 6000 BCE, as established authentically by the great Vedic scholar and savant B.G. Tilak, on the basis of the *R̥g-Veda*, in his work *Orion*, religion and philosophy have gone hand in hand. The Vedic seers and sages, with deep insight and comprehensive outlook, sought to discover the Ultimate Reality behind all the ever-changing variegated phenomenal manifestation called the 'Universe' so that human life and activities could be conducted meaningfully in the context of that background Reality which permeates and informs all existence. They arrived at 'That One Supreme Reality' (*Tad-Ekam*) through different stages of enquiry, open discussions, and deep inward concentration and meditation. They designated IT as 'Brahman' (the Spiritual Infinite) and declared that IT is of the nature of Universal Consciousness (*Prajñānam Brahma*) which is noumenally transpersonal, and yet on the phenomenal plane gives rise to and informs all entities and beings as their Inner-Self (*Pratyak-Atman*),

endowing them with empirical individuality and functional reality. Hence, for the Vedic seers, the manifested universe was not a mere meaningless, isolated, independently existing material phenomenon of disparate objects and beings, but an inter-connected vibrant living reality subsuming all entities and beings, whether appearing phenomenally as inanimate or animate, as non-human, human, or divine, as material or spiritual.

In religious life, therefore, the Supreme Spiritual Infinite (Brahman) was conceived, for facility of adoration and worship by people at different stages of development and with varied aptitudes and tastes, in various philosophico-mythical divine forms as a connecting link between the inner Spiritual Reality in Man (Atman) and the Infinite Spiritual Reality (Brahman) behind the universe. This would enable people to realize their unity or union (*Yoga*) with that Reality in their own way. The Supreme Reality, the Source of all phenomena, being Universal Consciousness, IT can certainly reach out to them according to their approach, as stated in the *Gītā* (IV.11);

*Ye yathā māṁ prapadyante
tāṁstathaiva bhajāmyaham;
Mama vartma-anuvartante
manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśaḥ.*

* The title of a forthcoming book by Dr. N.S. Rajaram, Bangalore, India, which was inspired by Bankim Chandra Chatterji's work, *Shri Krishna Charitra* in Bengali (1892).

In the very way people approach Me, I reach unto them; in every way all mankind follows My own path; they all lead unto Me.

But the mythical divinities are somewhat far away and abstract. Ordinary people cannot grasp their philosophical significance, nor can they feel intimate with them and are overwhelmed by their supernatural forms and far-away heavenly abodes. They can easily understand if the Divine comes to them in their own midst and lives a human life, participating in their earthly activities. Hence the necessity of Divine Incarnation on the earth who will play-act (*Lilā*) as a human being facing all the circumstances of life.

The religious instinct in Man needs a Divine Incarnation. Whether really the Divine incarnates is a moot question and cannot be rationally settled, though nothing is impossible for That which is the source of the universal phenomena and all its entities and beings. It is a matter of faith and the vast majority need it in one form or another. It is also immaterial to establish the fact of Divine Incarnation historically so long as the concept is religiously fruitful and helps to take man to his ultimate Spiritual Goal. In Christianity, the mythical Christ is more important and central to religious life than the historical Jesus. Similar is the case with regard to Sri Krishna and other Divine Incarnations and religious Prophets.

We see, therefore, that Divine Incarnations, Messengers of God, etc. are generally evolved by raising some person with extraordinary abilities and qualities to that status, or such a person raises himself to it. However, it is really the faith in the Incarnate Divine, whether actual or artificial, that helps a person to rise high spiritually. If one has no faith, even a real Divine Incarnation will be of no use to him, just as the eternally existing Infinite Spiritual Reality behind the universe abiding within each being as the Self (Atman) is of no use to the materialist. Everyone thinks of Life and Existence according to his own limited knowledge and

experience within his brief span of existence on the world-stage, shut off from the before and after of his life. The concept of olden times, or of illiterate villagers, and that of the modern educated are not the same. A stranger may fail to find mangoes on the tree in the winter season; that does not mean that the tree does not bear mangoes. It is not impossible that Divine Incarnations are real — a part of the game of the universe.

However, once a person is regarded as a Divine Incarnation, after his passing away from earthly life, the devotees begin to heap upon him all their conceptions of the mythical Divine, and all sorts of supernatural deeds and miracles are attributed to him. This is done by the devotees to enhance their devotion to their own Ideal of devotion and worship (*Iṣṭa*), by raising It high in their estimation and making it extraordinary. It is also done by persons such as the Christian missionaries and others who want to spread the personality and message of their Ideal to increase His following, maybe with different motives. Thus, in course of time, the earthly life of the person conceived as a Divine Incarnation gets submerged in a heap of supernatural events and miracles. This has happened in the case of all persons conceived as Divine Incarnations, Messengers, or Prophets of God, etc., such as Sri Rama, Sri Krishna, Moses, Buddha, Christ, Mohammed, Guru Nanak, and others. So far as the religious spirit is concerned, it is natural and personally useful to strengthen the faith, if the evils of proselytization and other aggressive unspiritual motives are avoided. A mother adorns her little child in different ways to express her love and joy.

II

In India, Sri Rama and Sri Krishna have been considered the pre-eminent Divine Incarnations. Their influence on the Hindu mind and society is tremendous and all-pervasive. For several thousand years, every aspect of Hindu life and thought has been

deeply influenced by contemplation and meditation on their life and activities and teachings, described in the two great *Itihāsas* — the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* —, the *Hari-vaṁśa*, and in several *Purāṇas* and other scholarly works. Whether we take philosophy or religion; literature or poetry; art, architecture, or sculpture; music, dance, or drama; festivals or celebrations; social or family life — the influence of Sri Rama and Sri Krishna are ubiquitous. However, though Sri Rama and Sri Krishna were great historical figures of royal lineage, their lives and activities too have been, naturally, surrounded with several miraculous and supernatural events, submerging the historical core of their lives and activities, judged in the light of current historical conceptions and standards. Of course, many things were added to serve the need of different aspects of religious life and sentiments (some silly things too were introduced by ignorant or mischievous people), just as we furnish and decorate the rooms in which we propose to live with appropriate furniture, carpets, tapestries, screens and trappings, paintings and vases, etc. as per our tastes and means. This was especially so in the case of Sri Krishna who, because of the protean illustrious manifestations of his life and activities, was considered a '*Complete Incarnation of Divinity*' (*Pūrṇa-Avatāra*), rather the Divinity itself in human form (*Kṛṣṇastu bhagavān svayam*), while all others are thought of as only partial manifestations (*Aṁśa-avatāra*).

The emotional aspect of Man craves for expression as much as his rational aspect, and it has its own tangible reality in its own sphere of experience; it is a part of life. As it is said, 'The lover's eye sees the Helen's beauty in Ethiope's brow'. Though the human brain may not understand it, the human heart needs it; it seeks to love and be loved. The emotional, the aesthetic, the active, and the recreational aspects of life are as much parts of human life with their own reality as the rational aspect. The merely

rational will leave one high and dry, and it disintegrates the all-round unity of life. The Supreme Reality is *Sat-Cit-Ānanda* (Existence-Knowledge-Bliss) by nature and has all the three aspects of *Ichhā-Jñāna-Kriyā* (Willing-Knowing-Acting) on the phenomenal plane which manifest in the universe. They are an inseparable triad like the heat and light of fire.

So we see that just as from a seed planted in a congenial soil, owing to its very nature and inherent potentialities, a beautiful mighty tree grows up with numerous branches covered with shapely leaves, fragrant flowers, and luscious fruits, the Divine Personality of Sri Krishna, full of potentialities, grows up adorned by the devotees with all their sentiments, expressing his divine greatness in all aspects of life, according to their spiritual needs, making him the centre of their religious emotion. Some of the miraculous deeds attributed to Sri Krishna are not looked upon as supernatural by the devotees, but as the expressions of the divinity of their Ideal. By dwelling on them with faith, the mind is lifted up from the sordid mundane to the subtle supra-mundane sphere, from whence the mind can at the next stage rest on the Absolute Spiritual Reality. This is the underlying reason for the additions or 'interpolations' or 'mythification' of Sri Krishna's life, just as in the case of other Incarnations, etc. This is done deliberately by great sages for this purpose. The Krishna of emotions is more real and filling to the minds of people than the historical one. People want to contemplate the Divine and not the human. The potentialities of Sri Krishna's life make it possible to have a playful Vrindāban-Krishna with his flute and peacock-feather-crest, surrounded by the cows and calves looking intently at him and listening to the flute. One cannot have such a conception round Sri Rama, Shiva, Christ, or other Prophets. Only the 'historians' are interested in the 'historical' Krishna in these far away times.

III

Leaving aside the miraculous and the supernatural, from the purely historical point of view also, Sri Krishna enters intimately into the life of people, at the different stages of his growth, fulfilling the different sentiments and emotions of the people in a natural way — as a lovely beloved child to his parents and for the cowherd-folk of Gokula; as an attractive fun-loving playful young boy at Vrindāban, with his flute and peacock-feather-crest, to his boy and girl cowherd play-mates; as an adolescent youth acting as the unselfish loving friend of all, coming to their rescue in difficulties; in adulthood, as a fearless and heroic warrior and consummate strategist; as an upholder of justice, and chastiser of the wicked and protector of the good; as a mature statesman and wise counsellor; and above all as a profound comprehensive philosopher with a wide vision, and an enlightened spiritual teacher of *Karma-yoga*, with deep insight and goodwill for all.¹ He is ever calm and smiling, unperturbed under all calamitous cir-

cumstances and ups and downs of life. One never finds Sri Krishna in a depressed mood. His face is always adorned with a smile (*smayamāna-mukhāmbhujam*), because his mind always dwelt on the Highest Truth and All-pervading Spiritual Reality within himself and in all beings.

There was certainly a great historical figure in the person of Sri Krishna; and it is his great qualities which inspired and prompted people to divinize his personality and life and adorn it with all their religious emotions. A vast and wonderful literature of high sentiments of divine love has grown up centering round Sri Krishna of Vrindāban as a joyful and playful pastoral young boy of about 9 or 10 years, which can be truly understood and appreciated only by the pure in heart with a spiritual bent of mind, and who look upon it as the spiritual sport of the Divine residing within all the human souls (*akhila dehinām antarātma-dṛk*), though couched in human language. This apart, as already mentioned, Sri Krishna's life and activities have left their deep and all-pervasive impress on every aspect of religio-spiritual life and activities of the Hindu mind and society. In his dual role as an intimate playful Divine amidst people, spreading confidence and joy, and as a great philosopher and teacher of *Karma-yoga*, guiding people amidst life's trying circumstances to face them with equanimity, as well as leading them on step by step to their life's ultimate Spiritual Goal, the *summum bonum*, Sri

1. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (X.43.17) graphically describes the varied ways in which the young but powerful Sri Krishna (about 11 years of age) appeared to the assembled courtiers and the men and women who had gathered to witness the wrestling match when he arrived in the court of King Kamsa at Mathura, along with his elder brother Balarāma, and entered the arena for the wrestling match arranged for them with the grown-up experts Chāṇūra and Muṣṭika (with the foul intention of getting rid of them):

*Mallānām āsaniḥ, nṛṇām naravarāḥ,
strīṇām smaro-mūrtimān,
Gopānām svajano, asatām kṣitibhujām śāstā,
svapitroḥ śīśuḥ;
Mrtyuḥ bhojapateḥ, virāṭ aviduṣām,
tattvaṁ param yuginām,
Vṛṣṇīnām paradevatā iti vidito
raṅgam gataḥ sāgrajāḥ.*

Sri Krishna, as he entered the arena along with his elder brother, appeared thus:- To the two wrestling experts, as the very thunderbolt; to the people, as the best of men; to the women, as the very god of love embodied; to the cowherd folk of Vrindāban, as their own kin; to the wicked rulers, as the chastiser; to his parents, as their dear child; to Kamsa, the King of Bhoja, as Death personified; to the common masses, as a great wondrous being; and as the Supreme Reality and Truth, to the Yogis.

Krishna has entered deeply the Hindu psyche.

IV

Generally, from a very narrow point of view of historicity, a great person's life and activities are restricted to what we can gather from their immediate physical effects on the then current events. But there is an invisible aspect of his personality which wields a greater influence in a vaster field over a large number of people for scores of centuries, even after the physical figure disappears from the scene. It is also seen to be growing with the passage of time, the potentiality for which was inherent in the historical person, like in a seed. This also is a part of history and is a wider aspect of his personality. The physical person is only its concrete medium, like the sun of a mass of light, which spreads over a vast area. When an atom-bomb is exploded, its effect continues over a wide surrounding area of the blast for several months. All that forms part of its history. One has to evaluate a tree along with its flowers and fruits in the future seasons, and not merely its trunk, branches and leaves, and flowers and fruits for the time being seen. So, both aspects of a person have to be taken to describe the total person and his history. A person's personality is according to the picture formed in the minds of the generations of people as a whole, and cannot be restricted to a narrow so-called historical physical perspective formed in the mind of the historian. He cannot, by the way, have all the relevant facts, especially with regard to ancient events, not all of which may have been recorded but come down mostly as tradition. Sri Krishna's personality is still growing in the mind and consciousness of vast numbers of people all over the world, even beyond the Hindu fold.

We may also ponder about the nature of history of a person. A man's personality is ever-changing from birth till death. His ideas also are changing. Then at what stage

should we take his personality as a standard and judge? Even the person himself does not remember all the past events in his life correctly, or changes his views about them. Moreover, the history about him is written by others according to their understanding, knowledge, and prejudices. We see different accounts of the same events — praised highly by the friends, and condemned outright by the foes, in the way it affects them or their interests. Histories written by some are upset by others, or by the same person at a later date if his viewpoint changes. Some try to mould history according to their ideological concepts. Then there is deliberate falsification of history to suit the needs of the rulers by resorting to perversions and concoctions, by ignoring glaring facts, or by twisting them to suit their theories.²

V

No doubt, for the chronological understanding of events, a historical perspective will be highly useful. But the task is not easy. For, since the advent of Westerners as rulers in India, in whose consciousness Sri Krishna had not made home, a purely physical point of view is brought to bear on his life and work, and Western scholars have interpreted them, as well as all Hindu literature and achievements, according to their own notions; rather, mostly to serve the requirements of the political situation. The Christian missionaries too denigrated them to suit their proselytization work. The Islamic invaders and rulers earlier were blunt. They did not bother to go into the niceties of examining the extant Hindu literature critically, with a view to perverting the prevailing ideas about the different aspects of Hindu culture or about Sri Krishna, but used

2. In respect of the nature of history, see this writer's article in the *Prabuddha Bharata*, February to June 1992 issues, on 'The Unique Space-Time and Historical Sense of the Hindus'.

the sledge-hammer to destroy whatever they could. They resorted to disposing of the scholars and the libraries, and tried to eliminate all concrete artistic expressions which they felt were un-Islamic.

The Western nations, with the development of rationalism and science in recent centuries in Europe, were of a subtle type. They had begun to question and analyse everything, and there was a spirit of enquiry. They were dissatisfied with many religio-cultural manifestations in the West and had started analysing and rejecting them as unscientific, including the dogmatic Christianity which they felt was superstitious and opposed to progress. When the Westerners, with this modern outlook, first came in contact with the Indian thought and culture through Sanskrit literature and saw its breadth of outlook, liberality, and profundity, they were overwhelmed, and high encomiums followed in the early stages. But this was only for a short period when the Europeans had not yet established their rule and political supremacy in India. Soon it became evident to them that their rule and political supremacy cannot be maintained over a populous vast country for a long period by a small number of foreign conquerors unless their own superiority in respect of religion and culture and race and language is established and imposed on the subject people. This was resorted to as a deliberate policy by the Western nations in general, whose burgeoning energy was conquering and colonizing the countries all over the world, with the Christian missionaries following in the wake to abet them in religious matters. Wherever they could they destroyed, just as the Islamic hordes did, the old civilizations after occupying their lands. Where they could not destroy on a large scale as they could in India, they resorted to perverting and denigrating its religion and culture, art and literature, its heroes and great men, and all other achievements of the country.

In India, the British rulers used very subtle political and administrative methods to subvert by controlling and manipulating the educational and economic fields. They resorted to *suppressio veri* and *suggestio falsi* to establish the superiority of Western nations and their culture on the one hand, and, on the other, to impress upon the natives their inferiority in every respect, and to denigrate their religion and culture, society and great personalities. They made use of the Christian missionaries to establish the superiority of Christianity and Christian nations by various devious means and to present the Hindu religion and society in a derogatory and perverted manner to promote conversions to Christianity, aided by the political and economic support of the British rulers.

It is a great pity that most of our intelligentsia should have swallowed, without discrimination and self-respect, the interpretations given by Western scholars, with an alien background of religion and culture and a narrow concept of history, who were motivated with political interests to denigrate everything Indian. The minds of the educated were firmly impressed with the Western ideas that the Vedas are the blabberings of primitive people, that the *Itihāsas* and *Purāṇas* are mere myths full of interpolations, and that the Hindus had no historical sense and did not keep any historical record. For the sake of Indians, Indian history was being unearthed by the Westerners concocting and upholding their defects and weaknesses to show that the people of India have always been a subject people without any originality or greatness.

VI

In this pessimistic and disheartening situation, there were some loud voices of protest — there were a few Western voices too among them — calling upon the nation to study independent of the Western framework its glorious ancient heritage in a rational and comparative spirit, and to evalu-

ate it in the context of the world situation in the corresponding ages. Then they will find that the Hindu civilization was of very great antiquity and was far ahead of others in every respect until recent times. India had been the inspirer of many civilizations and cultures all over the world in ancient and medieval times, the evidences for which are forthcoming from different parts of the world with research in different disciplines and archaeological findings. As Will Durant, the great historian of world civilization, has pointed out in the volume on 'Our Oriental Heritage':

India was the motherland of our race, and Sanskrit the mother of Europe's languages. She was the mother of our philosophy; mother, through the Arabs, of much of our mathematics (and medicine); mother, through the Buddha, of the ideals embodied in Christianity; mother, through the village community, of self-government and democracy. Mother India is in many ways the mother of us all. With the advent of Modern Age, since Raja Rammohan Roy, several great sages and saints like Swami Dayananda and Sri Ramakrishna, thinkers and patriots like Bankim Chandra Chatterji and Bal Gangadhar Tilak, arose to reinstate India to its pristine glory. Bankim Chandra wrote, besides several patriotic works, *Sri Krishna Charitra* in Bengali from a historical perspective. The tide turned and enthusiasm was instilled in the nation; and it received a great fillip with the triumphal appearance of Swami Vivekananda in the West towards the close of the last century carrying the great and eternal message of India to the world. In the wake of Vivekananda have come the sage-poet Tagore, Sri Aurobindo the great Yogi, and Mahatma Gandhi, all of world-wide stature, and a host of other luminaries proclaiming and resuscitating the glory of India in thought and action. As Sri Aurobindo has declared:

The going forth of Vivekananda, marked

out by the Master as the heroic soul destined to take the world between his two hands and change it, was the first visible sign to the world that India was awake not only to survive but to conquer.

VII

Strange! Even after all these great events and declarations and the political independence of India, the Western system of education has continued, and the country's glorious history and culture are neglected by the politicians under false notions. The educated elite are still under the influence of the brainwashing by the erstwhile British rulers. They resist all change which new knowledge through unprejudiced study, astronomical and archaeological discoveries, and research in ancient geo-hydrological and ecological conditions have yielded establishing incontrovertibly the antiquity and glory of Indian culture and civilization. Why? All this to retain their hold on the politico-economic advantages they have gained at the cost of the nation.

However, Time is a great factor. The great inherent ancient potentialities of India, so long suppressed, are coming up to the surface. In recent years, a number of thoughtful Indian and foreign research scholars, both in India and abroad, have realized the misrepresentation made by the European and other scholars in pre- and post-independence days regarding Indian history and culture. Studying independently and working on scientific lines, they are trying to establish the real glorious history and antiquity of Indian culture and its indigenous origin and growth, as well as its long-recognized greatness all over the world from ancient times. They are doing research independently, free from the ideological or politicized conclusions propagated under the alien rulers and ideologies for promoting the superiority of Western culture and denigrating that of India. The new band of research scholars, in their sev-

eral published works, have shown the hollowness of the motivated, far-fetched and unsupported linguistic and other ideological theories of the old school by confronting them with scientific facts based on archaeology, astronomy, literary evidence, and ecological conditions, which modern researches in India and abroad have revealed.

Dr. N.S. Rajaram, one of the prominent new research scholars, has written a book on the *Search for the Historical Krishna* to counter the views expressed by Western scholars: that the Krishna legend is all myth without any historical basis; that the *Mahābhārata* is not of old origin and is only a collection of writings of different authors at different periods; and that the *Purāṇas* are also of the same category — mythological in nature and without any historical value; moreover, they are all declared to be of very recent origin.

In the light of the above views, first of all to establish the antiquity of the Vedas and

the *Mahābhārata*, Dr. Rajaram has given in a Prologue, as a background to his work on the life of Sri Krishna, the results of recent independent researches as against the prejudiced views of the old theories. He has tried to sort out the genuine historical events connected with Sri Krishna, mostly based on the *Mahābhārata*, and aided by the works of the ancient dramatist Bhāsa and a few other relevant works where necessary. He has tried to give a connected and interesting account establishing that Sri Krishna was a great historical figure who shone on the stage of ancient India and made his mark in life, and left his impress on every aspect of Hindu life and thought. The traditional date of the Mahābhārata War is 3138 BCE. Sri Krishna lived for 36 years after the war, and with his passing away, the *Kali-Yuga* started in 3102 BCE. The historicity of Sri Krishna and the Mahābhārata War play an important role in the chronological formulation of Indian history. □

Krishna

SUJATHA PADMANABHAN*

The sky is beckoning my spirit, in a silent invitation to unite with its Timelessness. But how can I, fixed to my frame as a petal to its colour, merge with this frameless canopy of infinity?

Where does eternity begin and where does it end? And how can I embrace it in my out-stretched arms?

Blue. The hue of deep mysteries, beckons me to its weightlessness. 'Rise higher and higher, lighter and lighter... I shall flood you with nectared rays of golden light from my deep, inverted cup.

'Come hither.' It whispers more urgently. 'Rise beyond the dead weight of claustrophobic corridors of your mind. Your thoughts, light and fragrant as the scented wind, is the kiss of divine sweetness that I long for.'

Krishna, Beloved, my Lord of sky-blue, I turn to Thee. For I long for endless ānanda, and Thou my Lord, art that.

* Ms. Sujatha Padmanabhan is of Madras.

साधनगीता Gita for Spiritual Practice

साधनप्रकाशिकासहिता
With an Exegesis on Spiritual Practice

(Continued from the previous issue)

DR. B.R. PHANI KUMAR

अथ भक्तियोगः

भक्तियोगेन परमेश्वरः प्राप्तुं सुलभ इति विवक्षुः भक्तियोगस्य भक्तवरेण्यानां च लक्षणप्रतिपिपादयिषुः श्रीभगवानुवाच—

Yoga of Devotion

Wishing to show that the Supreme Lord is easy to attain through the path of devotion and to establish the characteristics of the path of devotion and of pre-eminent devotees, the Blessed Lord said—

११. अनन्यचेताः सततं यो मां स्मरति नित्यशः।

तस्याहं सुलभः पार्थ नित्ययुक्तस्य योगिनः॥ (८.१४)

11. O Partha! I am easily accessible to the yogi who is ever concentrated and always remembers Me everyday with his mind on nothing else.

अनन्यचेताः न अन्यविषयं चेतो यस्य स अनन्यचेताः भगवदारूढचेतस्त्वात्। सततं यो भक्तः मां परमेश्वरं सर्वात्मानं स्मरति चिन्तयति नित्यशः अनुदिनं तस्य भक्तपुङ्गवस्य अहं सर्वेश्वरः सुलभः पार्थ नित्ययुक्तस्य निरुद्धचित्तवृत्तेः योगिनः। भक्त्या परमेश्वरार्पितं चेतो येन तस्यैव हि योगस्समाधिश्च सिद्ध्यति यतो भगवत्प्राप्तिः।

For such an excellent devotee, ever concentrated yogi, who has always restrained the mental modifications, whose mind is not on anything else because of its being established in the Lord, and who devotedly remembers Me, meditates on Me, the Supreme Lord, I, the Lord of all, am easy of attainment, O Partha! Verily, yoga and concentration are accomplished by one who has, through devotion, offered his mind to God, wherefore he attains Him. (8.14)

नित्यसमाधिमतो योगिन एव भगवत्प्राप्तिः। स च समाधिरनन्यचेतसस्सिद्ध्यति। अनन्यचेतस्त्वं नामाविरतभगवद्ध्यानम्। तच्चाश्रान्तध्यानं पुनः भगवति सर्वकर्मफलार्पणशीलस्यैव संभवति। अतः सर्वकर्मफलसमर्पणमुपायमाह—

Attainment of God is only for that yogi who is ever concentrated. Such concentration is possible for one whose mind is one-pointed and is not on anything else. Here one-pointedness means constant meditation on God. Such constant meditation, again, becomes possible only in the case of one who offers to the Lord the fruits of all actions. Therefore, the Lord suggests dedication of the fruits of all actions as a means—

१२. यत्करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत्।

यत्तपस्यसि कौन्तेय तत्कुरुष्व मदर्पणम्॥ (९.२७)

12. O son of Kunti! Offer to Me whatever you do or eat or sacrifice or give or whatever penance you perform.

यत् स्नानपानध्यानजपादि सर्वं कर्म करोषि यदन्नादि अश्नासि भुङ्क्षे यद् यज्ञादौ हविरादि जुहोषि ददासि

प्रयच्छसि यद् धनधान्यहिरण्यादि पात्रेभ्यः यत् तपस्यसि कौन्तेय तत् सर्वमपि कर्म परमेश्वरायैव करोमि न मम फलायेति निरहंकारबुद्ध्या कुरुष्व मदर्पणम् परमेश्वरार्पणम्।

Whatever works you do like bathing, meditating, telling beads, etc., whatever food etc. you eat, partake, whatever oblation etc. you offer in sacrifice etc., whatever money, rice, gold, etc. you give, offer to the deserving, whatever penance you do, offer unto Me, the Supreme Lord, with the egoless understanding, 'All that work I do only for the Lord and not for my sake'. (9.27)

एवं सर्वमपि मदर्पणं कुर्वन्—

Thus offering everything to Me—

१३. मन्मना भव मदभक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु।

मामेवैष्यसि युक्त्वैवमात्मानं मत्परायणः॥ (९.३४)

13. Concentrate your mind on Me, be My devotee, sacrifice unto Me and bow down to Me; thus fixing your mind on Me and having Me as the Supreme Goal, you will attain Me alone.

मन्मनाः मयि संस्थापितं मनो यस्य स त्वं मन्मना भव। नित्यं मामेव चिन्तयेत्यर्थः। एवं मद्भक्तो भव। मामेवानुसन्धत्स्वेत्यर्थः। मद्याजी भव मदर्थमेव सर्वाणि कर्माणि कुरु। मां परमेश्वरं भक्त्या नमस्कुरु। मामेव नान्यं एष्यसि गमिष्यसि। युक्त्वा आत्मानं देहादिसङ्घातं समाहितचित्तो भूत्वा एवं यथोक्तप्रकारेण मत्परायणः अहमेव परमयनं यस्य स त्वं मत्परायणो भूत्वा मद्भावं प्राप्स्यसीत्यर्थः।

Be one whose mind is established in Me, concentrate on Me. The meaning is, 'Think of Me alone always'. Similarly, be My devotee, that is, connect yourself to Me. Sacrifice unto Me, do all the works for My sake. Bow down to Me, the Supreme Lord, with devotion. Thus, restraining the self, the complex of body, etc., becoming concentrated as explained, you will reach Me alone—and no other being—having Me alone as the Supreme Goal. That is, you will thus attain My Nature. (9.34)

किञ्चैवंगुणसंपन्नः—

Moreover, being imbued with such qualities—

१४. मत्कर्मकृन्मत्परमो मद्भक्तः सङ्गवर्जितः।

निर्वैरः सर्वभूतेषु यः स मामेति पाण्डव॥ (११.५५)

14. He who works for Me, has Me as the Supreme Goal, who is My devotee, is devoid of attachment and bears no enmity to any being, attains Me, O Arjuna!

मत्कर्मकृत् मदर्थं कर्म करोतीति मत्कर्मकृत्। मत्परमः अहमेव परमः परमात्मनोऽन्यशरण्यो नास्तीति भावः यस्य स मत्परमः। अतो मद्भक्तः सङ्गवर्जितः लोके केनापि सङ्गं न करोति। निर्वैरः निर्गतवैरभावः। केनचिदपि वैरं न करोतीत्यर्थः। यः स मां मद्भावं मदात्मतां एति गच्छति हे पाण्डव अर्जुन।

He who works for My sake is My worker. He who recognizes that there is no other refuge than I, the Supreme Self, has Me as the Supreme Goal. Hence, he is My devotee. He is devoid of attachment, does not get attached to anybody in the world. He is devoid of enmity, does not behave in a hostile manner with anybody. O Arjuna! Such a one attains Me, attains My Nature, becomes one with Me. (11.55)

अतः त्वमपि—

Therefore, you also—

१५. मय्येव मन आधत्स्व मयि बुद्धिं निवेशय।

निवसिष्यसि मय्येव अत ऊर्ध्वं न संशयः॥ (१२.८)

15. Establish your mind in Me alone, place your intellect in Me. No doubt, you will reside in Me alone hereafter.

मय्येव नान्यस्मिन् देहगेहधनमानाद्यनित्यदृश्यप्रपञ्चे मन अन्तःकरणमाधत्स्व संस्थापय। मय्येव बुद्धिं धियं निवेशय। बुद्ध्या मामेव निरन्तरं ध्यानादिभिः चिन्तयेत्यर्थः।

तस्य सततभगवद्ध्यानस्य फलमाह—

निवसिष्यसि निवासं प्राप्स्यसि मयि निरतिशयानन्दात्मके परमात्मन्येव। अतः ऊर्ध्वं देहत्यागानन्तरम्। न संशयः अस्मिन्विषये कोऽपि संशयो नास्ति।

Establish, fix your mind, the internal organ in Me alone and not in any other thing like body, home, money, honour, etc. of the unreal external world. Place your intellect only in Me. The meaning is, always think of Me alone through meditation etc. with your intellect.

The Lord declares the fruit of such constant meditation on the Supreme Self—

Hereafter, after leaving the body, you will live, obtain your abode in Me alone, the Supreme Self of the nature of unsurpassed Bliss. There is no doubt whatever regarding this. (12.8)

अथ भगवत्प्रियभक्तस्य लक्षणानि प्रतिपादयति यानि साक्षान्मोक्षसाधनानि ज्ञात्वा मुमुक्षुः नित्यमनुतिष्ठेदिति—

Now, the Lord expounds the characteristics of the devotee dear to Him so that the aspirant would always practise these qualities, knowing these to be the direct means to Liberation—

१६. अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः करुण एव च।

निर्ममो निरहंकारः समदुःखसुखः क्षमी॥ (१२.१३)

१७. सन्तुष्टः सततं योगी यतात्मा दृढनिश्चयः।

मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्यो मद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः॥ (१२.१४)

16, 17. My devotee, who is without hatred for any creature, friendly, utterly compassionate, free from the ideas of 'I' and 'mine', equable in misery and happiness, forgiving, ever contented, meditative, self-controlled, of a firm resolve, with his mind and intellect dedicated to Me, is dear to Me.

अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानां आत्मनः अपकारजुगुप्सादुःखादिकारणान्यपि भूतानि न द्वेष्टि न शतृत्वेन पश्यति। सर्वाणि भूतानि प्रति समत्वबुद्ध्या आचरतीत्यर्थः। मैत्रः मैत्रीभावयुक्तः सर्वाणि भूतानि प्रतीत्यर्थः। एवं सर्वेष्वपि करुण एव च केवलकरुणाभरितहृदय इत्यर्थः। निर्ममः ममभाववर्जितः। निरहंकारः अहंकाररहितः। समदुःखसुखः दुःखे सुखे च समवृत्तिकुशलः सुखदुःखप्रेरितरागद्वेषरहित इत्यर्थः। क्षमी क्षमागुणसंपन्नः शत्रूनपि क्षमत इत्यर्थः। सन्तुष्टः सततं सर्वकालेष्वपि सन्तुष्टान्तःकरणस्सकलविधकाङ्क्षाऽभावात्। योगी समाधियोगे संस्थापितचित्तः। यतात्मा संयतमनाः। दृढनिश्चयः परमात्मसाक्षात्काराय कर्तव्येषु जपध्यानविवेकवैराग्याद्याध्यात्मसाधनेषु दृढः निश्चयः यस्य स दृढनिश्चयः। मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिः मयि परमेश्वरे अर्पिते मनो बुद्धिश्च यस्य मद्ध्यानयोगतत्परस्य स मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिः यः मद्भक्तः स मे ईश्वरस्य प्रियः इष्टः।

My devotee does not hate, does not look upon any creature with enmity even though causing him harm, aversion and misery. He considers all with equanimity, is friendly with all and his heart, similarly, is full of compassion for all. He is devoid of the sense of 'I' and 'mine'. He is equable, has the wisdom of equanimity in misery and happiness, that is, he is devoid of love or hatred stimulated by happiness or misery. He is forgiving, that is, forgives even his enemies. (12.13)

Because of the absence of all types of desire, he is always satisfied and is with a contented mind. He is meditative, having established his mind in the yoga of concentration, and self-controlled, of a restrained mind. He is of a firm resolve regarding spiritual practices like japa, meditation, concentration, dispassion, discrimination, etc. which are the means to the direct perception of the Supreme Self. Such a devotee of Mine who is intent on

meditating on Me, with his mind and intellect dedicated to Me, the Supreme Lord, is dear to Me. (12.14)

१८. यस्मान्नोद्विजते लोको लोकान्नोद्विजते च यः।

हर्षामर्षभयोद्वेगैर्मुक्तो यः स च मे प्रियः॥ (१२.१५)

18. *He, by whom the world is not agitated, who is not agitated by the world, who is free from joy, anger, fear and anxiety, is dear to Me.*

यस्मात् एवंगुणविशिष्टान्मद्वक्तात् नोद्विजते न उद्वेगं दुःखशोकादिकमाप्नोति लोकः। सर्वभूतहितपरो हि मम भक्तः। अपि च लोकात् सुखदुःखाद्यनेकभिन्नानुभवप्रदात् स्वयं न उद्विजते न उद्वेगमाप्नोति च यः।

तत्र कारणं भगवद्वक्तस्य हर्षादिमनोविकारराहित्यमाह—

हर्षामर्षभयोद्वेगैः हर्षः इष्टप्राप्तौ आनन्दः। अमर्षः अनिष्टादिप्राप्तौ क्रोधः। भयं इष्टवियोगाद् भीतिः। उद्वेगश्च एतैः मुक्तः विमुक्तः एतैर्न विक्रियत इत्यर्थः। यः एवंभूतः स च मे प्रियः।

By My devotee characterized by these (above-listed) qualities, the world does not get agitated, does not get pain, misery, etc. For, My devotee is intent on doing good to all beings. Not only that, he also does not get agitated by the world which gives many varied experiences of happiness, misery, etc.;

The Lord states that the absence of mental modifications like joy, etc. in His devotee is the reason for this—

He is free from joy which is happiness on getting the desired object; anger which is intolerance on meeting with the undesired object; fear which is panic due to separation from the beloved; and agitation. The meaning is: he does not get excited by them. Such a one is dear to Me. (12.15)

१९. अनपेक्षः शुचिर्दक्ष उदासीनो गतव्यथः।

सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी यो मद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः॥ (१२.१६)

19. *My devotee, who is without expectation, pure, able, indifferent, without worry and who renounces all works, is dear to Me.*

अनपेक्षः किमपि नापेक्षते इत्यनपेक्षः। यथाप्राप्तसन्तुष्ट इत्यर्थः। शुचिः बाह्याभ्यन्तरशुद्धिमान्। दक्षः कर्मसु स्वकर्तव्येषु कुशलः। उदासीनः इष्टानिष्टादिप्राप्तावविक्रियः। गतव्यथः चिन्तारहितः। सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी सर्वकर्मपरित्यागी यो मद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः।

As he does not crave for anything, he is without expectation. The meaning is, he is contented with whatever he gets. He is pure within and without, able, expert in performing his duties. He is indifferent, is unmoved by getting good or evil, free from worry and renounces all endeavours, actions. Such a one is dear to Me. (12.16)

२०. यो न हृष्यति न द्वेष्टि न शोचति न काङ्क्षति।

शुभाशुभपरित्यागी भक्तिमान् यः स मे प्रियः॥ (१२.१७)

20. *He who neither rejoices, nor hates, nor worries, nor desires, who renounces the auspicious and the inauspicious, who is devoted, is dear to Me.*

यो मद्भक्तः न हृष्यति हर्षं नाप्नोति इष्टप्राप्तौ, न द्वेष्टि अनिष्टप्राप्तौ न शोचति शोकं न करोति लाभजयाद्यप्राप्तौ न काङ्क्षति अप्राप्तं किमपि वस्तु शुभाशुभपरित्यागी शुभाशुभफलकारणं सर्वमपि कर्म परित्यजतीति शुभाशुभपरित्यागी यतो भक्तिमान्। भक्त्या भगवदर्पितचेतसो हि कर्माणि विनश्यन्ति नान्यस्य विषयाभिमुखचेतसः। एवंगुणसंपन्नः यो भक्तः स मे प्रियः।

My devotee, because he has devotion, does not rejoice, does not feel joy on getting the desired thing; does not hate obtaining the unwanted things; does not worry, does not experience sorrow, on not meeting with gain, victory, etc.; does not desire any unfulfilled

object; renounces all works as these result in good and evil. Verily, works get destroyed for one who has offered his mind to the Lord with devotion, and not for one whose mind is directed towards the sense-objects. The devotee endowed with such qualities is dear to Me. (12.17)

२१. समः शत्रौ च मित्रे त तथा मानापमानयोः।

शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु समः सङ्गविवर्जितः॥ (१२.१८)

२२. तुल्यनिन्दास्तुतिमौनी संतुष्टो येन केनचित्।

अनिकेतः स्थिरमतिर्भक्तिमान्मे प्रियो नरः॥ (१२.१९)

21,22. *A devotional person, same to foe and friend, same in honour and dishonour, in cold, heat, pleasure and pain, devoid of attachment, alike to praise and blame, reticent, contented with anything, having no abode, of steady intellect, is dear to Me.*

समः तुल्यः शत्रौ आत्मनः अपकारप्रवृत्ते परिपन्थिनि च मित्रे सुहृदि च तथा एवं तुल्यः मानापमानयोः अर्हणातिरस्कारयोः अविक्रिय इत्यर्थः। शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु यथाप्राप्तेषु समः द्वन्द्वभावरहितः इत्यर्थः। सङ्गविवर्जितः सर्वत्रापि असक्तः। तुल्यनिन्दास्तुतिः निन्दा गर्हणम् स्तुतिः स्तोत्रम् ते निन्दास्तुती अत्यन्तविरुद्धे तुल्ये समे यस्य स तुल्यनिन्दास्तुतिः। मौनी मौनमभ्यस्यतीति मौनी। मौनेन संयतवाचो ह्याशु आत्मनि एकाग्रं भवति मनः। संतुष्टः येन केनचित् यदृच्छालाभेन। अनिकेतः स्थिरनिवासरहितः। स्थिरमतिः स्थिरा निश्चिता आत्मविषयामतिः यस्य स स्थिरमतिः भक्तिमान् मे प्रियो नरः।

He is the same, identical to a foe who is opposed and tending to harm him, and to a good-natured friend; similarly, he is the same, unchanged in honour and dishonour. In cold, heat, pleasure and pain which accrue in whatever way, he is the same; that is, he is devoid of (unaffected by) pairs of opposites. He is detached, devoid of attachment everywhere. (12.18)

Blame, i.e. censure, and praise, i.e. eulogy, which are totally opposed to each other are the same to him. He is reticent because he practises silence. Verily, mind becomes easily one-pointed in the Self, only for one who has restrained his speech through silence. He has no fixed abode. He has a steady, firm understanding about the Self. Such a devotee is dear to Me. (12.19)

एवं भगवदर्पितचेतसां लक्षणान्युक्त्वा तादृशानामव्यभिचारिभक्तियोगयुक्तानां त्रिगुणातीतज्ञानप्राप्तिं ब्रह्मभावं च प्रतिजानीते—

Thus stating the qualities of those who have offered their minds to God, now the Lord avows Knowledge transcending the three attributes and oneness with Brahman for such as are endowed with unwavering devotion—

२३. मां च योऽव्यभिचारेण भक्तियोगेन सेवते।

स गुणान्समतीत्यैतान् ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते॥ (१४.२६)

23. *He who serves Me with unwavering Yoga of devotion, becomes fit for the state of Brahman, transcending these attributes.*

मां परमेश्वरं च यः साधकः भक्तियोगानुष्ठाता अव्यभिचारेण अनन्यरूपेण भक्तियोगेन पूर्वोक्तलक्षणेन सेवते समर्चति सः गुणान् सत्त्वरजस्तमोरूपान् क्रमेण सुखकर्मप्रमादालस्यनिद्राभिः पुरुषं रज्ज्वा इव विषिन्वतः स्वरूपज्ञानं निरुन्धतश्च अतीत्य अतिक्रम्य एतान् ब्रह्मभूयाय ब्रह्मभावाय कल्पते शक्तो भवतीत्यर्थः।

The spiritual aspirant, the practitioner of the Yoga of devotion, who serves Me, the Supreme Lord, with unwavering, undistracted Yoga of devotion, the qualities of which are described above, gradually transcends, overcomes these attributes which are of the nature of sattva, rajas and tamas, which, like a rope, bind a being with pleasure, work,

inadvertence, laziness and sleep, and which obstruct the Knowledge of one's Nature, and becomes fit for the state of the Nature of Brahman. (14.26)

अतः—

Therefore—

२४. चेतसा सर्वकर्माणि मयि संन्यस्य मत्परः।

बुद्धियोगमुपाश्रित्य मच्चित्तः सततं भव॥ (१८.५७)

24. *Renouncing mentally all actions in Me, having Me as the Supreme Goal, resorting to the Yoga of intelligence, always fix your mind on Me.*

चेतसा मय्यर्पितेन सर्वकर्माणि मयि परमेश्वरे संन्यस्य सर्वकर्मफलं ईश्वरार्पणबुद्ध्या त्यक्त्वा मत्परः अहमेव परो यस्य स मत्परः एवंभूतः त्वं बुद्धियोगं बुद्धिस्सततपरमेश्वरध्यानलक्षणा तया योगः बुद्धियोगः तं उपाश्रित्य अनुष्ठाय मच्चित्तः मयि चित्तं यस्य स मच्चित्तः सततं निरन्तरं भव। मामेवानुचिन्तय।

Resigning all actions to Me, the Supreme Lord, through the mind offered to Me, renouncing the fruits of all actions with the thought that they are dedicated to the Lord, having Me as the Supreme Goal and resorting to, practising the Yoga of intelligence, that is, the union through the intellect which has the characteristic of always meditating on the Supreme Lord, ever be with your mind fixed on Me. Always think of Me alone. (18.57)

यदि मोक्षमिच्छसि त्वं मोक्षस्वरूपं परमेश्वरं एकमेव शरणं गच्छेत्युपदिशति—

'If you seek Liberation, take refuge only in the Supreme Lord, Whose Nature is Liberation.' Thus the Lord teaches Arjuna—

२५. तमेव शरणं गच्छ सर्वभावेन भारत।

तत्प्रसादात्परां शान्तिं स्थानं प्राप्स्यसि शाश्वतम्॥ (१८.६२)

25. *O Bharata! Take refuge only in Him (the Lord) with all your being. You will attain, by His grace, supreme peace and eternal abode.*

तं परमेश्वरमेकमेव नान्यं शरणं गच्छ। परमात्मनः स्वात्मरूपत्वात् नित्यसत्यत्वात् सर्वाधारत्वाच्च स एव परमं शरणम्। अतः सर्वभावेन देहेन्द्रियमनोबुद्ध्यहंकारादिसर्वसमर्पणेन तं शरणं गच्छ भारत। तत्प्रसादात् परमेश्वरकृपया परां मोक्षाख्यां शान्तिं स्थानं प्राप्स्यसि शाश्वतमच्युतं पदम्।

Take refuge only in Him, the Supreme Lord, and not in any other being. Because the Supreme Self is one's own Self, eternally true and the support of all, He alone is the Supreme Refuge. Therefore, O Bharata! take refuge in Him with all your being, by dedicating everything like body, senses, mind, intellect, ego, etc. By His grace, by the compassion of the Supreme Lord, you will attain supreme peace named 'Liberation' and eternal abode, imperishable state. (18.62)

यस्मादहमेव वासुदेवः आत्मा सर्वभूतानां तस्मात्—

I, Vasudeva, am the Self of all beings. Therefore—

२६. सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं ब्रज।

अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः॥ (१८.६६)

26. *Renouncing all duties, take refuge in Me alone. Grieve not, I will liberate you from all sins.*

सर्वधर्मान् तथा अधर्माश्च परित्यज्य मामीश्वरमेकमेव शरणं ब्रज। अहं आत्मभूतः सन् त्वा त्वां सर्वपापेभ्यः सकलकर्मफलेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मोक्षं दास्यामि। मा शुचः शोकं मा कार्षीः।

Giving up all righteousness and also unrighteousness, take refuge only in Me, the One Lord. Being the Self of your being, I will liberate you from all sins, from the fruits of all actions, and give you freedom. Do not grieve, do not worry. (18.66)

(to be continued)

Synopsis of Question-Answer Session

SWAMI NIKHILESWARANANDA

(Continued from the previous issue)

Q. *We have learnt that Swami Vivekananda had received a boon that he could die at his will. Then why did he die? Why is he not alive today?* (Ms. Bhumika Bagadwal, a student of AKI College, Almora)

A. Who says Swami Vivekananda is not alive today? He is very much alive, but in a fine form. He is, as he himself said, 'a voice without a form'. Even today he is inspiring many, guiding many people. Recall the immortal words he uttered to Eric Hammond: 'It may be that I shall find it good to get outside of my body, to cast it off like a dis-used garment. But I shall not cease to work! I shall inspire men everywhere until the whole world shall know that it is one with God.'

Q. *Is it proper for girls to renounce the world? Is it not more difficult for them? Is it not possible to actively participate in your organization without renouncing the world?* (Ms. Shobha Rawat, a student residing in BTC Girls' Hostel, Almora)

A. Girls too can renounce the world, become nuns; they can join the Sarada Math. Difficulties are many if one wants to renounce the world and become a monk or nun. But 'where there is a will, there is a way'. If one has intense desire to drink the nectar of immortal bliss while serving human beings as the manifestation of the Divine, some way will be found out by him or her. But all cannot and need not renounce. You can certainly participate in our activities without renouncing. Many householder devotees and volunteers do help us in our service activities. It would be easier and better however for girls to participate in the activities of the Sarada Math. Fortunately for

you, a new branch of the Sarada Math has opened in Almora near Kasar Devi where Swami Vivekananda had performed *tapasya*.

Q. *They say, 'it is not proper for girls to argue'. Is it true?*

A. 'Arguing for the sake of arguing' is always bad, be it boys or girls who do the arguing. But arguing for the sake of clearing one's understanding is always commendable. Sister Nivedita used to argue very much with Swami Vivekananda. Swamiji was not displeased with her. Rather he encouraged her by saying that one should not accept an idea until one is convinced. Giving his own example he said, 'I fought my master for six years, before accepting him. That is why I know every inch of the way.'

Q. *What should we do when in despair, when being truthful proves to be very costly?* (Ms. Nidhi Rawat and Ms. Nidhi Tiwari, students of Adams Girls' Inter College, Almora)

A. Sri Ramakrishna said, 'to practise truth is the real austerity in this Kaliyuga.' Today we realize the significance of this statement when we find that those who practise truth have to undergo so much sacrifice, so much suffering, so much criticism. Nowadays those who practise truth are considered 'impractical'! Indeed it is very costly in a worldly sense to practise truth, but for those who are convinced that 'Truth ultimately triumphs, *satyameva jayate*,' and that practising truth leads one to the ultimate Truth, God, no price is too heavy to pay.

Q. *God is one, then why are there so many paths to reach Him? Why not only one path? Why do people think differently?* (A student of

Adams Girls' Inter College, Almora)

A. Why do you want that everyone should follow one path? Swami Vivekananda said, let there be any number of paths, so that people can choose a path according to their temperament. If you relish a particular variety of sweet, you enjoy it by all means but if your friends like some other types of sweets, let them enjoy those items. That is why you have a variety of sweets in the shop to choose from. You should not force your choice on them even as you do not like them to force their choice on you. Let everyone have the freedom to choose the path best suited to him or her; but there should be no quarrel between followers of different religions. Just as all sweets taste sweet, even so all religions lead one to God. If people come to know that all the paths lead to one God, the quarrel between different religionists will cease. Sri Ramakrishna practised various religions: Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, etc. and then declared, '*Jata mat, tata path, as many faiths, so many ways*'. This demonstrates the principle underlying religious harmony.

Q. When and how was the Ramakrishna Mission established? What is its aim? (Sri Amit Tiwari, a student of Almora Inter College)

A. Ramakrishna Mission was started by Swami Vivekananda on 1 May 1897. It was formally registered under the Societies' Registration Act XXI of 1860 in 1909. The aim of the Ramakrishna Mission is to do good to humanity in all possible ways irrespective of caste, creed, religion or nationality; to try to remove the sufferings of humanity for which many hospitals, relief works, rural and tribal development projects, educational institutions, etc. have been started. Swami Vivekananda wrote to Sister Nivedita, 'My ideal can indeed be put in a few words, that is to preach unto mankind the divinity within and how to make it manifest in every moment of their life.' Those who join the Ramakrishna Mission as monks or as well-wishers follow the motto,

'*Ātmano mokṣārtham jagaddhitāya ca*, for one's own liberation and for the good of the world'. The idea behind the multifarious activities of the Ramakrishna Mission is not social service but worship of the Divine in man, *Śiva-jñāne jīva-sevā*. There are at present 137 branch centres of the Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission all over the world with their headquarters at Belur Math near Calcutta.

Q. Unemployment is a big problem for the youth here in Uttarakhand. How can we earn our livelihood under these adverse circumstances?

A. One of the main problems faced by the youth today, not only in Uttarakhand but in all parts of the country, is that of employment. 'Apply, apply, no reply' is the predicament for many youths. The solution lies in 'self-employment'. There is a great demand for craftsmen, artisans, etc. in our country. You can learn some trade under the TRYSEM scheme of the Government or privately, and start a small enterprise. Thus, not only can you get self-employed, but you can also generate employment for others. Those youths who are ready to do manual labour, ready to work hard, have managed to earn something. But many youths want only white-collar jobs, preferably in Government departments or in the public sector so that there is the security of job, more pay, more leave, and freedom to work less! Such posts being limited, naturally there is a great rush. All cannot be accommodated in Government jobs, so new avenues must be searched out by the youths in the private sector or through self-employment. But this requires preparation. There are three types of youths: employed, unemployed and 'unemployable'. 'Unemployable' youths will have first to become employable by their improving/acquiring skill, capability, zeal, etc. before getting employed or self-employed.

Q. You told in your lecture that Swami Vivekananda wanted us to love our motherland. Is it not better to love the whole world and work

for the betterment of the whole of humanity rather than working only for our own country? (Sri Shailendra Joshi, a student of Government Inter College, Almora)

A. Surely, we must love the whole world but that does not contradict our spirit of patriotism. Swami Vivekananda's patriotism was not narrow in outlook. He said in great agony, 'As long as even a dog is without food in my country, my whole religion would be to feed it.' But he also said, 'What is India to me? I belong to the whole world.' 'Charity begins at home.' Let us first put our house in order and then only we will be able to work for other nations. All can love their own motherland while simultaneously working for the whole world.

There is another important reason why, in spite of being a monk, Swami Vivekananda exhorted the people of India to work for their own motherland. Every nation has a peculiar role to play in the scheme of the world. Every nation has one great ideal which forms the backbone of that race. With some it is politics, with some it is social culture; others again may have intellectual culture and so on for their national background. Swami Vivekananda discovered that our motherland has religion and religion alone as its basis, as its backbone, as the bedrock upon which the whole national life has been built. It is this spiritual wisdom that India has for ages contributed to the rest of the world when links were established with them. The whole world today is in need of this spiritual wisdom of India in order to save itself from self-destruction, in order to alleviate the agony arising out of a materialistic outlook on life.

We must save India first not only because it is our motherland but because India has a definite contribution to make for universal harmony. The whole world will survive only if India survives. Swami Vivekananda raised the question, 'Shall India die?' and goes on to say, 'Then from the world all spirituality will be extinct, all

moral perfection will be extinct, all sweet-souled sympathy for religion will be extinct, all ideality will be extinct, and in its place will reign the duality of lust and luxury as the male and female deities, with money as its priest, fraud, force and competition its ceremonies, and human soul its sacrifice. Such a thing can never be.'

The great historian Arnold Toynbee said, '...the only way of salvation for mankind is an Indian way. Emperor Ashoka's and Mahatma Gandhi's principle of non-violence and Sri Ramakrishna's testimony to the harmony of religions: here we have the attitude and the spirit that can make it possible for the human race to grow together into a single family — and in the Atomic Age, this is the only alternative to destroying ourselves.'

India's message is the message of '*Vasudhaiva kutumbakam*, the whole world is one family'. According to Vedanta, the whole world is permeated by the same conscious principle — it is a holistic universe. Modern science has also taken this view. Modern man is in search of peace of mind which he is not getting through material prosperity or external factors. People all over the world are now thirsty for drinking the nectar of Vedanta, which says that Atman, the source of immortal bliss and infinite peace, is within each and every one of us. The message of Vedanta, of the divinity of the soul and the solidarity of the whole universe, is the crying need today. That is why the queen of adoration of Swami Vivekananda was India, the land of the expiration of the lofty truth of Vedanta.

If we begin to truly love our motherland, we will love its message and build our own lives on the Vedantic basis and all problems like corruption will melt away and we will also be able to realize the vision of Swami Vivekananda: 'conquest of the whole world by India's spirituality'. This will usher into the world a new type of human civilization beaming with joy. □

AHIMSA 1995

What is the Purpose of a University?

PROF. MICHAEL NAGLER

Based on the talk given at the University of California, Berkeley, on 16 September 1995.

It gives me great pleasure to be here with my friends at this very interesting series of conferences. Some of my friends have noted that in my title: 'What is the Purpose of a University?' there is an allusion to a book written by a previous president of this University: *The Uses of a University*. That approach seemed a little bit cynical to me. It looked a bit like what Boniface VIII is said to have remarked when he was elected to the Papacy: 'Now that we have the Papacy, let us enjoy it.' In other words, my point is that the university is not, or should not be, just a collection of resources for us to make whatever use of we will. A university has an innate purpose in human culture, and one cannot ask what is the purpose of a university without asking what is the purpose of education. And you cannot ask what the purpose of education is without asking what is the purpose of life. Part of my point will be, as it has been with all the previous speakers, to find a way to recover from the trivialization in our modern culture which has made us forget to ask these large framework questions.

I begin with a rather unusual quote:

The immediate future of our race is indescribably hopeful. There are at the present moment impending over us three revolutions, the least of which would dwarf the historical upheaval called by that name into absolute insignificance. And they are: (i) the material and economic social revolution which will result from the establishment of aerial navigation; (ii) the economic and social revolution which will abolish individual ownership and rid the earth at once of two immense evils: riches and poverty,

and (iii) the psychical revolution of which there is here question.

You may justifiably be asking yourself, what is wrong with this person!, but it becomes clear after a while that nothing is wrong with him, but he died in 1901. So he couldn't see the result of any of these three revolutions.

I want to refer to the findings of another educator. She looked at the work of a number of school children who had been asked to do some drawings of the world that they imagined they were going to move into. She was distressed to find that almost all of the drawings contained elaborate forecasts of new technologies. This would not be too surprising since so many of the images of the future presented through the mass media are filled with these science fiction high-technology scenarios. What was surprising however was that when she asked the individuals whether their images showed a future that they wanted, none of them wanted to live in the scenarios that they had drawn. She then asked them what they might do now, or when they became adults, to help shape the new technologies. None of the students had any ideas.

You know H.G. Wells is said to have remarked that civilization is always a race between education and catastrophe. And I think what we are grappling with these days is the sickening feeling that catastrophe is winning, and education isn't doing much about it.

What I would like to do here this morning is to depict briefly a practical and effective way we might get out of this situation, and perhaps gather even a little encourage-

ment from understanding exactly what the catastrophe is, what exactly formal education might have to say about it, and very pragmatically, what we as individuals could begin to do to 'wake education up' and get it back in the race against catastrophe.

Another quote I'll give is describing an age gone by. The age in question is described in the following terms:

It was an age where the failure of the greatest experiment in secular civilization that the world had ever seen had just taken place and they were witnessing the return of society to spiritual principles:

Now what age do you think that was written about? It could have been 1964, but in fact it was the age of St. Augustine, the fourth century. Now this gives me some hope because it shows that we've been here before. Humanity has recovered from precisely the crisis we are in right now in times gone by, even though the crisis now has been deepened because we have much slicker technology. Back then they had only gladiatorial contests, now we have television. Still, I think the crisis is of exactly the same type and because people have gotten over it before I think we can get over it now.

Professor Smith [the previous speaker] mentioned Bosnia and Rwanda. I want to mention something about both the crises. Both of them, we know, were precipitated by abuses of the mass media. And in Bosnia (and former Yugoslavia generally) it was five years of television, of a kind of which one journalist speaking in New York said: 'Imagine if you had that man D... running for governor of Carolina — imagine having him on television every day for five years, your country would turn into what happened in former Yugoslavia.' In Rwanda the level of technology was not quite so high, it was done mainly by radio.

But there's a third kind of social disaster that is happening because of the mass media and that brings me right up to the statistics which Professor Mehta mentioned

at the very beginning. Some people say we are about to face a sixty-five percent increase in violent crime over the next few years, especially homicides, and especially due to handguns. To me this means we are losing the very name of civilization. One of my favourite philosophers, Epictetus, said, 'There is only one thing that you can control, and therefore only one thing that you need to control — one thing only, that you have responsibility to control, and that is the imagery in your own mind.' Of course, with the mass media we have given up control over our most precious capacity: to imagine, to have vision, to think deeply and so forth. Now the catastrophe, as far as I am concerned (if we want to think about it in a practical way and not in a global way and get completely paralysed), is that the mass media is defeating the purpose of our educational institutions. The culture produced by the mass media is leading us rapidly into catastrophe, and unless education has something immediate and definite and long-term to do about that, it will not be living up to its responsibility.

In the *Republic* (Book VIII), Socrates really takes aim at the educational system. It is recommended reading for anyone interested in this subject. One of his key remarks was that the problem with educators (he calls them sophists, today we call them professors, but it's the same deal) — the problem with these sophists is that instead of finding a goal for society they just make up reasons for society to pursue the goal it already has. It is a superb characterization of what our problem is. I cannot get over the shock that I felt when I was on the course committee which had the mission of deciding which courses should be instituted at the University. We were asked to approve a number of courses for the engineering school and we didn't know where these courses came from. They looked sort of odd — unacademic. And it turned out that a local firm wanted to have these courses taught so

that the students could be better fitted to take over positions in their employ. And I said, 'Well, this is completely inappropriate. It's not the kind of criteria that we are interested in.' So what the chairman of the course committee did was to arrange for the personnel officer from the firm to take us out to lunch, and 'bribe us' with wine, and it wasn't very good wine at that! And I remember thinking: 'You (that person) should be in prison,' I thought to myself. And if I said that to him, I know what he would say. He would say, 'What? You didn't like the wine?'

Recently Charles Marshall, speaking to a panel of AT&T (this was business talking to government about university), made the following statement: 'We are not interested in education simply for altruistic reasons. We need knowledgeable, well-educated, highly skilled employees if our business is to succeed.' Well, however significant that statement might be, the difficulty is that over the past twenty years since I was on the course committee and since Mr. Marshall made this statement, there has been a profound reduction in the sense of purpose at the University such that remarks of this kind have become normal. By way of contrast, we can recall what the first president of the University of California said almost a hundred years ago: 'The University must make for less misery among the poor, less ignorance in school, less suffering in the hospital, less fraud in business, less folly in politics.' So my question is how can we recover some space for the university in particular, for educational systems more broadly, and for our culture in general to make some headway back against this reduction?

Kant spoke beautifully of the purpose of education when he said that there exists something in our minds which causes us to take an interest: (a) in ourselves, (b) in those with whom we have been brought up, and (c) in the progress of the world. It is called in Judeo-Christian terminology the healing of

the world in accordance with the ordinance of God. And therefore Kant continues in his little book on education: '... for this purpose we must educate students to set *little store* by the enjoyment of the good things of life.'

A couple of years ago the incoming class in the classics department was given a party. I attended and noticed that a lot of students were telling how they defended the fact that they were studying classics to their parents. Their parents had all said to them: 'How are you going to earn money with this degree?' And they had said to their parents: 'We're going to study classics because we like it.' I thought to myself, 'I didn't have to justify myself taking Greek to my Zoology professor at Cornell when I was a pre-medical student. I thought I would have to, but he said, 'You're taking Greek, that's great! Go and do that.' And I could have sat down and explained to these students, 'Well, first of all, we study an ancient language because it's a wonderful thing to do with our minds'. I know I'm talking mainly about the intellect, but having to learn two ancient languages and a bunch of modern ones just makes you feel good about yourself. It's a good use of your personal resources. More importantly, you begin to connect with something called culture. As Kant says: 'One generation educates the next.' The task of converting from a failed experiment in secular civilization to a civilization based on spiritual values is bigger than any one of us can do. It's bigger than what all of us put together can do by ourselves right now. We need some contact with the past. We need some contact with the smart things that have been said by people who lived before us so that we can take it a step further. And I must say, for me, when I read the works of the ancients, there's also something very human that happens. I don't feel quite as alone in the world anymore. I feel that I can break down that horrible existential barrier between myself and another human being and reach out and share my existence with them

spiritually on this bridge of what they were thinking, what they were suffering, and what was happening in their mind.

Unfortunately enough, none of the incoming students could articulate anything of this. All they could say was in effect that 'instead of financial hedonism, let's have psychological hedonism'. I believe that here is a point where we can make a difference. Every time one says that the purpose of education is for making money, don't let them get away with it. Whether it be the chancellor of the university or your neighbour. I believe that being honest, standing up as one person, and saying, 'This is my opinion' — honest discourse about the purpose of life and education, would help to make headway in this fight so we can have a society that recognizes the value of learning. We can only have that kind of society if we have a clear sense of what the purpose of education is and struggle for it.

So I'm going to talk about a few things I think we can do as individuals or jointly. Of the things we can do as individuals, one is we can dissociate this nexus that has grown up between money and power on the one hand and education on the other. This will be very painful, very disruptive and very difficult process, but I think we have to begin it right away. Perhaps it will mean that the University is going to have a lot less money for a long time, but it is much better to have a university without money than to have a university without purpose — which would be no university at all. Secondly when someone says about education: 'What kind of job is this aimed at? — just very politely say to them, 'That's not what we are here for.' We are constantly challenged by people who say, 'What's the career? What job does this lead to?' — this is the answer to them. At first we were very nonplussed and out of countenance when we heard those questions, but eventually we realized what we have to do was take a radical stance and say: 'If we are training students to take

up a job that already exists in society, then we have failed. We want now to train students for new jobs and a whole new society.' I have found over the years a little bit of polite 'corrective discourse' of this kind can be marvellously effective.

Next I want to refer to a recent newspaper report on something which I was very excited by, which was the discovery of the Bose-Einstein condensate. First of all there was absolutely no discussion in the article about what the significance of the discovery was, that the discovery in 1902 meant that the universe is not a bunch of separate material particles purposelessly banging into one another, and that it has tremendous revolutionary consequences for what we think a human being's purpose is. The article said nothing about that, but instead said: 'This discovery climaxes a race that was being carried on among three universities.' And it went on to tell who won, who created the Bose-Einstein condensate first. So the mass media concept of science is totally one of competition and it is seeping into our value system. We have to push back against that and remind people that we are here for knowledge, not to beat some other scientist to the knowledge-punch.

Thirdly there is a vexed question about the relationship between education and religion, which I do not want to open, but about which I want to say something. To do this I would like to quote to you a remarkable statement by William James, one of the greatest psychologists of education that we've had in our culture. He said:

... and the faculty of voluntarily bringing back a wandering attention over and over again is the very root of judgement, character and will. An education which would improve this faculty would be education par excellence. But it is easier to define this ideal than to give practical directions for bringing it about.'

One last quote, from Gandhiji: 'Working for a purpose higher than ourselves is education. All else is mere information.' □

Reviews and Notices

Āratrīkastotrāṇi (Vyākhyāsahitāni); Swami Harshanandapuri; publ. Ramakrishna Math, Bull Temple Road, Bangalore 560 019; first edition, September 1996; pp. 48; price Rs. 5/-.

The book under review is an offering of Swami Harshanandapuri in the form of a presentation of the philosophical significance of the *stotras* which are regularly recited or sung in the branch centres of the Ramakrishna Math. Among the *stotras*, the first two *stotras* written by Swami Vivekananda are sung in the evening prayer in the shrines in Ramakrishna Math and Mission centres. Apart from this, *Sarvamaṅgalastotram* which is found in the *Devīmāhātmya* is also included in this book. The main intention of the author is to provide a lucid interpretation of the *stotras* in Sanskrit. To him, if someone knows the meaning of the *stotras* and it comes to his mind at the time of singing, worship of God becomes deeper: '*stotraḡānasmakāle eva arthānusandhānamapi bhavēccet bhagavadupāsanaṁ gādhataraṁ bhūyāditi asmākaṁ abhilāṣaḥ*' (*Nivedanam*).

The first chapter deals with the Sanskrit commentary on the songs originally composed by Swami Vivekananda in Bengali. The introductory verse gives an account of nine types of *Bhakti* like hearing the grace of the Lord (*śravaṇam*), singing the grace of God (*kīrtanam*) which is accepted as dearest by all the persons (*sarvajantupriyagāna-rūpaṁ*), recollecting the grace, etc. Swami Vivekananda himself has given the exact melodic form (*rāga*) and tempo (*laya*) to these composed songs. That the awareness of meaning is essential at the time of meditation or prayer is substantiated with the help of the *Yoga-sūtra* of Patanjali: *Tajjapastadarthabhāvanam* (p. 5). Other verses describe the divine function of Sri Ramakrishna: remover of worldly bondage, *bhavabandhanasya khaṇḍayitā* (p. 7), the performer of the difficult task, *kaṭhorakarmakartā* (p. 13), remover of the darkness of ignorance, *tamobhañjanahara* (p. 18), etc. The author has justified these divine characteristics in the light of the Upaniṣads like *Kaṭha*, *Kena*, etc., the *Nītiśatakam* (p. 17), *Śrīmad-Bhagavadgītā* (p. 15), etc.

The second chapter deals with the Sanskrit *stotras* composed by Swami Vivekananda which are also explained in lucid Sanskrit. In explaining these he has taken the help of the Upaniṣads, *Saundaryalahari*, *Amarakoṣa* (p. 24), etc. The author, after pointing out various divine quali-

ties of Sri Ramakrishna, has proved that he is really *avatāra-varīṣṭha* (incarnation par excellence) (p. 25).

Sri Ramakrishna had taught his disciples that just as the calm and cool sea and the sea in waves are one and the same, Brahman (*Śiva*) and Its power (*Śakti*) are one and the same. In order to adhere to this aspect of Vedantic philosophy admitted by Sri Ramakrishna, the author has put forth two chapters in which the grace of Mother or *Śakti* in general and Mother Sri Sarada in particular has been described (chapters III and IV). It has been accepted that *Śakti* in the form of Mother is the root cause of creation, maintenance and dissolution of the whole world, *Ṣṣṭiṣṭhiti-ināśānām śaktibhūte sanātani*, etc. (p. 31).

The *stotras* eulogizing the grace of Mother Sri Sarada Devi are composed by Srimat Swami Abhedananda, another famous disciple of Sri Ramakrishna. It is a remarkable fact that the author while writing a commentary on these *stotras* has adopted the methodology found in Vedic literature like mention of the Seer-composer, the metres in which these are composed, the utility and place for its application, and the name of the deity to whom it is offered. In the first *stotra* offered to Mother Sarada, it is said that here the deity is Mother Sarada (*tasya Śrīsāradāmātā devatā*), the name of the Seer-composer is Swami Abhedananda (*Śrīmadabhedānandasvāmī ṛṣiḥ*), the metres are *Totaka*, *Anuṣṭup* and *Upajāti* (*Totakānuṣṭupupajātayaśchandāmsi*), it is applicable to the devotional songs sung for pacifying Divine Mother (*Jagannāṭustosaṇāya saṅgītabhajanādiṣu viniyogaḥ*) (p. 36).

The concluding chapter is devoted to the five *stotras* composed by Swami Ramakrishnananda and these describe the divine functions of Swami Vivekananda. It is very much interesting that the author has described Vivekananda as *Vivekānanda*, that is, rejoicing in his own consciousness (p. 48).

The elucidation of the Sanskrit and Bengali verses in lucid *Devabhāṣā* is no doubt a pious job successfully accomplished by the author. Sanskrit scholars trained in a traditional way apart from Anglo-Sanskrit scholars can enjoy the commentary based on the *stotras*. Printing which is almost free from errors and cover design are quite up to the mark.

This book, though small in size, is rich in philosophical thought, and would remain a precious literature on Sri Ramakrishna, Sarada Devi and Swami Vivekananda.

Dr. Raghunath Ghosh, Dt. Darjeeling

Unmukta-Yogi: Swami Vivekananda (Hindi Drama); Sri Raghuraj Gupta; publ. Shivalik Shiksha Samsthan, A-2 Balda Colony, Lucknow 226 007; 1997; pp. 100; Rs. 50/-.

The book under review comprises two Hindi dramas on the life of Swami Vivekananda, one 'Himalaya Men Atma Sakshatkar' (Self-realization in the Himalayas), and the other 'Kashmir Ki Goda Men: Amarnath-Khir Bhavani' (In the lap of Kashmir: Amarnath-Kshir Bhavani). The author, Dr. Raghuraj Gupta, is a famous anthropologist and a devotee of Swami Vivekananda for over forty-seven years. He has painstakingly written the dramas providing exact dates of Swamiji's presence at a particular place.

In the first drama, the scene is presented as an episode when Swami Vivekananda accompanied by Swami Akhandananda travelled as a wandering monk in the Himalayas in search of Truth. On the way to Almora from Nainital, Narendranath had a deep spiritual experience in meditation—a revelation that the macrocosm and the microcosm are built on the same plan. This is his realization of the oneness of man and the universe, the individual soul and the universal Soul. Further, while walking towards Almora, Narendranath became completely exhausted and lay down, when a muslim fakir saved him from his exhaustion by feeding him with cucumber. During his wanderings in the Himalayas, Swamiji saw the plight of the poor and the downtrodden.

Swami Vivekananda went to Almora thrice: in August 1890, during May–August 1897 and during May–June 1898. In the first drama, the author covers three episodes that occurred during these three visits. The author has made a sincere attempt to present the local customs and traditions. The imaginary characters introduced in the drama and the representation of the real characters are also in tune with the events in the life of Swami Vivekananda. With regard to the authenticity of the dialogues in the book, there are many discrepancies which tend to confuse the reader. On page 27 it is mentioned that Swamiji returned to Calcutta a day after receiving a telegraphic message about the suicide of his sister. On the contrary, as per the biography of Swami Vivekananda, he started for Badrikashrama via Garhwal and Karnaprayag but, on hearing that the road leading to Badrikashrama and Kedarnath had been closed by the Government on account of famine in these parts, proceeded towards Srinagar (*Life of Swami Vivek-*

ananda, vol. 1, pp. 252–3). Similarly, Swamis Sadananda and Swarupananda were not Swamiji's brother disciples as mentioned on p. 34; they were his disciples. The statement on page 37 referring to the untimely death of Alasinga Perumal is wrong; it should be of B.R. Rajam Iyer, the first editor of *Prabuddha Bharata*. It is also not correct to mention Hinduism as a product of Semitic religion (p. 70) along with Christianity and Islam.

The second drama throws light on the manners and customs of the people and Swamiji's love for the people of all communities. It also shows how the muslims too accepted Swamiji as their own. The episode at Kshir Bhavani is very interesting and brings into prominence the Divine Mother's omnipotent Will. The national ideals of India are 'Renunciation and Service' and not 'Renunciation and Sacrifice (Kurbani)' as mentioned on page 70.

These are impressive dramas on the life of Swamiji. However, care should have been taken to present the scenes and dialogues based on the events and statements exactly as found in the authentic biography of Swamiji. Despite the discrepancies, the book will attract the attention of the youth and inspire them with Swamiji's message of national integration and inter-religious understanding.

*Swami Brahmasthananda
Nagpur*

An Action Plan For Human Survival And Excellence; Sampooran Singh, Kanwaljit Kaur and Paramjit Singh; publ. Faith Publishers, House No. 586 Sector 10-D, Chandigarh 160 011; pp. 78; price not mentioned.

Prof. Sampooran Singh has been a pioneering figure in the contemporary quest for harmonizing science and religion. His ideas have found significant expression in the many book he wrote using Indian insights in the process of achieving this synthesis. In the present monograph (strangely called 'monogram') in collaboration with Kanwaljit Kaur and Paramjit Singh, he suggests an action plan which is an extension, so to say, of what was presented in the USA in *Psychoscience* 1995.

Dr. Singh draws attention to two important facts, both happening in 1993: the centenary year of Swami Vivekananda's appearance at the Parliament of Religions in Chicago; 1993 also saw the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS). Nearly two

thousand scientists including one hundred and four Nobel laureates have issued a dedication entitled 'World Scientists' Warning to Humanity'. One can see a teleological connection in the seeds of harmony between science and religion sown by Swamiji and the passionate declaration of the scientists for achieving transcendence as the 'only alternative to extinction'.

The present monograph is, in terms of this background, an extremely important document. Dr. Sampooran Singh and his collaborators range widely and present a very cogent plan for human survival and excellence. The human being is seen as a complex of brain and body systems which need coordination and balancing. Consisting of nine chapters, the monograph explores virtually every facet of these systems. Parallels between cognitive revelations of modern physics and states of mind are very vividly but cautiously established. The states of *jagrat*, *svapna*, and *sushupti* are seen as levels with equal validity. Therefore, the different states have to be seen without getting caught in the identity of the perceiver and the perceived. As the authors say, 'most probably when ancient seers (subjective scientists) saw that motiveless and ego-less state during deep sleep ends entropy, they started enquiring whether motiveless and ego-less state is possible during waking state'. This could probably, say the authors, be the beginning of the process of meditation, looking at 'what is'.

We are led thus to seek the nature of experience and perception and the entire dynamics which underlies these states. But one has to do this with attentiveness and this attentiveness is the source of the wholeness and implicate order, to use David Bohm's famous equation. Once wholeness is perceived, all the human concerns on a global level become inevitably interconnected. It is here that the failure of the secular planners becomes tragically evident and the relevance of the Indian sages much more immediate. The action plan suggested by the authors for human survival and excellence on paper at least, seems pragmatic. It rests on the two pillars of restructuring science and restructuring education. It involves several phases of not only holding workshops but what is more, preparing new reading materials and teaching aids from the perspective of the latest findings in science. While the authors are to be commended for this pragmatic action plan, I wish that they took into account the findings of consciousness explorers such as notably Ken Wilber (especially his recent *Sex, Ecology and Spirituality*, Shambhala, 1995), Willis Harmon, Fred Alan Wolf (*The Spiritual Universe*, Simon and Schuster, 1996), and others in a much detailed way. I also feel that the edu-

cational thought of Swami Vivekananda himself and of J. Krishnamurti need more effective integration.

Though in a monograph form, this needs careful study by all those concerned with holistic living in contemporary contexts.

Prof. M. Sivaramkrishna
Hyderabad

Nyāya Kusumāñjali by Udayanācārya: English translation with Explanatory Notes, vol. 1; Prof. Dr. N.S. Dravid; publ. Indian Council for Philosophical Research, New Delhi 110 002; 1996; pp. 500; Rs. 550/-.

Nyāya Kusumāñjali of Udayanācārya is an important work of Nyāya school. Though it was translated earlier into English by Prof. E.B. Cowell and published in 1864, it was just the text of *Kusumāñjali* with the commentary of Haridas Bhattacharya. The text by itself is slightly difficult to follow as it is couched in the language of Neo-Nyāya. Students of Sanskrit literature cannot easily understand the text as one has to undergo training in Neo-Nyāya. Even then to translate it into English is equally difficult as English expressions become cumbersome and sometimes more difficult to follow than the original Sanskrit. For example, *Vyāvartyābhāvaavattatva bhāvikī hi viśeṣyatā; Abhāva virahātmatvam vastutaḥ pratiyogitā* (3.II). translates into 'The nature of the epistemic qualificand (of an epistemic qualifier) consists really in the latter being the locus of the absence of the excludent of the epistemic qualifier'. Of course, such instances are few.

Nyāya Kusumāñjali is a work, usually associated in the minds of students of Indian Philosophy, with the Nyāya proofs for the existence of God. However, proof for the existence of God or God's existence, is merely an excuse for the author of *Nyāya Kusumāñjali* to write a full-fledged treatise on Nyāya epistemology and metaphysics. As Prof. Dravid states in his preface, 'Avowedly the treatise is composed to establish the reality of God, but the author seems to have used the subject as an excuse to discuss and defend the epistemological and methodological doctrines of Nyāya'.

God is referred to by an innocuous single sūtra in Gotama's *Nyāya Sūtras*. There we do not have proofs for the existence of God. One does not know, if that sūtra is Gotama's original sūtra or was later interpolated into it by later thinkers. Anyway, Udayana seems to take his inspiration

from that single sūtra, to give a full-fledged theistic Nyāya.

He opens his work with this statement: The contemplation of God produces liberation. But the doubt arises: Is there a God to contemplate upon? Though, by and large, all accept the existence of God in one form or the other, the author anticipates objections to such a supposition. These objections mainly come from Cārvākas, Mimāṃsakas, Sāṅkhyas and also Advaitins and Buddhists. In the beginning, hence, he states the five-fold objections to be discussed in this connection. They are:

i) There is no transcendental cause of other-worldly existence (as Adṛṣṭa) (*Alaukikasya paraloka-sādhana-sādhana-abhāvāt*). This expresses doubt regarding God's existence, that merit and demerit which God is supposed to sustain, may not exist at all.

ii) Even if there is no such cause, one may be persuaded to perform the rituals that lead to other-worldly existence (*Paraloka-sādhana-anuṣṭhāna saṁbhavāt*). Even without belief in God as the author of Vedas, the Vedic injunctions may be followed if the Vedas are regarded as Self-authoritative.

iii) There is evidence to prove the non-existence of God (*Tat abhāva āvedaka sadbhāvāt*). Granting that God is the author of the Vedas, it does not follow that He is the Creator of the world.

iv) Even if God's existence is envisaged on the basis of some proof, the same cannot be valid (*Satve api tasya apramāṇatvāt*), i.e., there cannot be a Being like God who, without being embodied, can be a dependable Being.

v) Lastly, there is no valid proof establishing the reality of God (*Tat sādhanā pramāṇa-abhāvāt ca*). The proofs adduced for God's existence are all invalid.

All these contentions are from Cārvākas. These are countered. The Cārvākas then introduce another objection, viz., *Akasmāt eva bhavati*. The Mimāṃsakas who are non-theist also criticize the proofs for the existence of God.

These five objections are met with in the remaining chapters as follows:

i) If God is not the Cause, then what is Cause? How are cause and effect related? Is the relation a necessary relation? Is there anything like Shakti? This thus leads to an examination of the theories of causation in Cārvāka, Bauddha and Mimāṃsā systems. He also examines Brahma Kāraṇavāda of the Advaitins and Prakṛti Kāraṇavāda of the Sāṅkhyas. Then he establishes that God exists as a Supreme Being who directs the non-sentient Adṛṣṭa.

ii) The second argument is met by the

arguments drawn from the need of an external authority due to the fact of successive creation and destruction of the world again and again, because of which the knowledge of the Vedas cannot be preserved without interruption caused by annihilation; and since even the teachings of the sages cannot be wholly depended upon, therefore, there is no go but to admit Reality of God to explain the uninterrupted existence of religious traditions.

iii) God's existence cannot be proved by cognition or perception. He is imperceptible. What is non-cognition or non-perception? This is discussed. Udayana thus enters into the discussion of the whole gamut of Nyāya Epistemology and Methodology. He discusses six pramāṇas, viz., a) Perception, b) Inference, c) Testimony, d) Comparison, e) Arthāpatti and f) Anupalabdhi. The last two are rejected by him as being no pramāṇas. As regards the other four, they fail to contradict the reality of God. In fact, they derive their own validity from God's existence.

iv) Even if God exists, He cannot be a pramāṇa. The validity of God's knowledge is now taken for discussion. This concerns with a discussion of what constitutes pramā. In this connection Udayana examines the views regarding pramā and all the arguments given by the atheist including the Mimāṃsakas and point out that they are not convincing. He gives the true definition of pramā according to Nyāya. He thus establishes the validity of divine knowledge and omniscience of divine Being.

v) The fifth objection is countered with eight-fold arguments for the existence of God. Udayana remarks: Is it the fault of the post if the blind cannot see it? Hence, he pities the poverty of the intellect of the atheists (*Na hi eṣa sthāṇoḥ aparādhaḥ yat enaṁ andhaḥ na paśyati*). The eight proofs are given below:

a) All the things in the world are products like the pot and they have a producer or a creator. Hence, God as the creator of the world exists.

b) The movements in atoms have a cause, which cannot be other than the divine Being.

c) The existence and even the destruction of the whole universe is sustained by God. The forces that keep the universe going do themselves require some cause to support them and that is God.

d) God is necessary to lay down convention for word meanings.

e) God exists as an ultimate and unimpeachable source of all truth.

f) God exists as the author of the scriptures.

g) The sentences of the Vedas must have

been produced by a person because they have the nature of sentences just like the sentences of beings like us.

h) The last proof is peculiar. According to it, the whole ultimate cause of the material structure of the universe, viz., the number ONE of the atoms cannot come into being unless there is a being to take cognisance of the number.

Udayana claims he has countered all objections effectively. Yet there seems to lurk in his mind some dissatisfaction about the validity of inferential proofs for the existence of God. He, therefore, turns to experiential proof at the end. He writes, *Sa evaṃ Bhagavān śrutāḥ anumitāśca. Kaiścit sāksāt api drśyate prameyatvādeḥ ghatavat.* And he continues, *Tasmāt yogināṃ anubhavaḥ dharmajātvaṭ pramā, sāksātkāritvāt pratyakṣaphalani. Yogena maharṣayaḥ api vividiṣanti.*

Thus, the possibility of direct Intuitive Vision of God is within the limits of possibility and a person who has that vision needs no proof of God's existence. A bit exasperated (perhaps) by the sceptics' objections to his proofs, Udayana writes, 'The granite-hearted men who refuse to be convinced cannot be convinced at all.... I pray to you, O kind Lord, to put them on the right track.'

Prof. Dravid has reserved the critical analyses of the work for volume II.

Prof. Dravid has done a great service to Indian Philosophy. He is a Shastri and is trained in Navya Nyāya. In bringing out this book he has not only translated into English one of the most important anchor works of Nyāya Philosophy but also given explanatory notes which are highly transparent and luminous. I fully agree with Prof. Mrinal Miri's statement in the Foreword that, 'This book by Prof. Dravid will be an invaluable aid to our understanding and assessment of a very important school of Indian Philosophy.' These days very few students and teachers of Indian Philosophy have adequate knowledge of Sanskrit. This book and such other books will be of great help to such students and teachers of Indian Philosophy. Research scholars will find the book of immense help in their study of Nyāya Epistemology and Metaphysics.

I congratulate both Prof. Dravid and the Indian Council of Philosophical Research on this invaluable contribution to the literature on Indian Epistemology and Metaphysics and hope more Sanskrit-based studies in Indian Philosophy and the Darshana traditions will be sponsored by the I.C.P.R. in years to come.

Dr. S.G. Mudgal
Mumbai

Jada Bharata; Swami Tilak; publ. Sri Bajrangadas Kuti, P.O. Chipaner, via Timarni, 461 228, Dt. Hoshangabad, Madhya Pradesh; 1995; pp. 128 + xvi; price not mentioned.

Jada Bharata is a *Maha Kavya* in English written by Swami Tilak. It enunciates the essence of Indian philosophy and spirituality in poetic form. It is written in four line stanzas with the last syllable usually rhyming. Though some parts do not rhyme, the whole is marked with rhythmic melody. The rhetorical richness is enhanced through the skilled use of innumerable poetic embellishments. The poem is written in accordance with the conditions for writing poetry laid down by the ancient Sanskrit rhetoricians like Mammata and Vamana. The purpose of the poem is to bring spiritual relief to those whose lives are characterized by spiritual emptiness in the wake of excessive materialism. It emphasizes that 'So long as the mind of a man is governed / By *sattva*, *rajas* or *tamas* / — Goodness, passion or ignorance — / It continues unchecked to yield him fruit pious or impious' (p. 121). The solution lies in accepting and surrendering oneself to God as He is the only Reality, for 'God is all-pervading and older than the oldest, / ...He is the Ruler of the highest beings. / And dwells in his own Maya in every heart as the / Inner Controller — as the breath of breath' (p. 123). The dominant primary emotion or *rasa* is *śānta*, which is a state of spiritual equilibrium where all opposites are reconciled and transcended.

The tale of *Jada Bharata* is taken from the first fourteen *adhyāyas* of the fifth *skanda* of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. In *Jada Bharata* most of the stanzas are 'in the form of teachings — ethics, philosophical truths, religious duties, and commandments and fully represent the *Pravṛtti Lakṣaṇa* — self-involvement oriented, and *Nivṛtti Lakṣaṇa* — liberation oriented Dharma' (p. xi). These lofty philosophical precepts are addressed by the saintly Jada Bharata, a rustic, but a *Brahmajñāni*, to King Rahūgaṇa, who becomes spiritually enlightened after hearing them.

The poem is divided into five cantos. It begins with an excellent Preface by Subrahmanya Sastry and ends with an informative and indispensable Glossary. The poem, as we are told in the Preface, is written mainly for seekers of spiritual harmony in the affluent West. But its universal validity is aptly illustrated in its beautifully simple and exquisite lyrics which exemplify profound spiritual truths in a brilliant and successful way.

Dr. Rama Nair, Secunderabad